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THE
MESSAGE AND MINISTRATIONS
OF

DEWAN BAHADUR

DR. SIR BRAHMARSHI R. VENKATA RATNAM,

KT., M. A., L. T., D. LITT., LL. D., K. I. H. (i),
Former Principal, Pittapur Rajah's College, Cocanada ;
Ex-Vice-Chancellor, University of Madras.

EDITED

With Introduction

By

RAO SAHIB

DR. V. RAMAKRISHNA RAO, M. A., L. T., PH. D.,
Retired Principal, Pittapur Rajah's College, Cocanada ;
Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee Research Medallist in Letters,
University of Calcutta.

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R. V. Ratham.

*Unto
the 'fallen' and the forlorn
(the depraved, the depressed and the desolated ones)
with whose cause he identified himself
in lifelong service
whose heart-beats are herein re-echoed.*

*U. R.
(through the mists)*

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CORRECTIONS*

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Read</i>
25	13	and that	and
32	10	salts	salt
	11	are	is
33	30	oast	boast
35	24	proving	prove
41	23	so	to
45	29	become	becomes
51	9	tribune	tribunal
52	16	these	there

*Obvious typographical errors in spelling and punctuation being here left out.

OM !
INTRODUCTION

For the bereaved ones, this Eighth Volume will bear the same kind and degree of melancholy interest as the Seventh in that they present posthumous twins born together on the Master's first birth-day after the ascension. The absence of even the shortest of accustomed intervals now takes away the old pleasure of each succeeding publication being ushered with a recital of the review-appreciations of its immediate predecessor. Accordingly, the two joint presentations of the Day rendered all too dismal for the first time go forth to await the attention of perusal and appraisal side by side on the part of those who continue to cherish the honoured memory with grateful reverence.

Under the present altered conditions, this last collection cannot be more fittingly heralded than by a few general strains broadly recalling the worth of the noble personality and the precious pronouncement as a whole. As amply borne out by one and all of the Volumes, the Master lived his life upon the summit-levels of constant contact with the Eternal Spirit of Perfection. And with what necessary consequences or concomitants, not less striking because so natural, did he maintain that lifelong tenor? In the first place, his faith was sedulously renewed day by day in deep communion with, and by devout surrender to, the All-in-all of Grace. In the second place,

his very passion for the Living God led him repeatedly into moods and manifestations of intensely anguished abasement over separation (rather, separateness) from the Beloved One of the heart. For, in the expressive words of Ernest Raymond, the delightful author of *Through Literature to Life*, 'The ultimate pain of the world is the aching excess of our cravings over their satisfaction. Life fails us, and fails us more and more, as we become larger men, of higher sensibilities and rarer, subtler hungers.' Thus it is you come across ever so many marks of what Dr. Martineau called 'the paradox of piety' — self-humiliating confessions from a saintly soul that apparently had little to confess. At the same time, in the third place, there was always to be witnessed a magnificently generous sense of proportion about others which oftentimes flashed through a remarkable genius for that perception of inevitable disparity or incongruity between the real and the ideal which is denoted by the term 'humour'. Yet, in the fourth place, the in-seeing eye failed not to descry in the calyx of the commonplace the very matrix of the sublime. And lastly, in the fifth place, the warm-beating heart continued throughout in touch and tune with humanity as with humanity's informing God. So that, in the mellowed evening of life, the venerated presence proved as inspiringly companionable as ever, because intimately identified with those around though as but a prevailingly silent shadow.

In its entirety, the Message and Ministration handed down through those lips touched with living coal—now

hushed and quenched in hallowed silence — represents a wholesome philosophy of life elevated and illuminating in the extreme with a mastery of expression chaste, elegant, limpid, plastic and eloquent to a degree. Of the rational theology and the social faith it enforces with varying illustrations and far-reaching implications the recurrent key-note runs to the one, sole effect that a man is not his real self until the self is rejoicingly unified with the Universal Will and until that realised oneness clearly affirms and concretely attests, too, the common flesh and blood of all the children of men in Divine sonship and in lofty disregard of every conventional exception or arbitrary reservation. Of specific religious dogma there is little trace in the utterance. None the less, there is always evidenced a sensitive attunement to spiritual reality with a persuasive exhortation to keep the soul's aspiration moving ahead and aloft upon the two wings of practical idealism and productive optimism if it is not to be left behind to languish and to faint. In fine, from every point of view and according to any standard whatever, the store-house of the Volumes evaluates itself as quite an *embarras de richesse*. Emerson once described his Diaries as his 'Savings Bank'. Are not these Volumes such likewise, not for the author though, but for ourselves as the favoured inheritors?

In line with its elder sisters in the series, this particular production makes available one more conspectus of the thought, feeling, sentiment and experience of a pre-eminent thinker, scholar and devotee. It affords a

fairly full and diversified bill of fare for earnest-minded inquirers and soberly discriminating readers. It serves mannah for the inner life such as souls blessed with refined hungers have learnt to look for only at rare banquets of the spirit. It also purveys pabulum of comparatively lighter quality made up of academic interests and sociological issues as also of civic reminiscences. In all phases, however, it hints at deeps in the interior, and vistas in the exterior, life of the complete man which few have sensed even remotely.

In the casket of the First Section are contained gems that serenely reflect the untiring commendation of habitual prayerfulness as the supreme source alike of soundness in personal character and sweetness in social conduct; the unreserved identification of self with every little group in the field of spiritual endeavour—"Young in soul, Theists in spirit, a Fraternity in love;" the unqualified recognition of essential intercommunion among men and movements in their Heaven-impelled advance of faith from narrower moorings to broader bearings; the unaffected delicacy of modest disclaimer about the gentlest whisper of outside appreciation by spelling in it only the breath of personal worth and charity in the admirer's own self beyond any modicum of Divine donation; the unmeasured depth of regardful tenderness in the continued intertwining of heart-strings with individuals, institutions or localities once endeared in any relationship; the unfreezing genial current of the soul sparkling afresh with animated wit and humour through a calm equipoise of mind — an

index to fadeless trust in the outstretched arms of an Everlasting Providence under all vicissitudes and in face of the most serried phalanx of misconceiving hostility; the unremitting inculcation of the *rakhi-bund-bhai* spirit of chivalry among young men in the active maintenance of an atmosphere conducive to the peaceful progress of young women in the academic and social spheres; the unalloyed jubilation of heart and soul over forward strides in the practical reclamation of the ill-used 'female servitors of the temple' into truly honourable daughters of the Deity through virtuous wedlock; the unfaltering confutation of plausible sophisms in defence of pernicious systems like the birth-based differentiation of castes in social economy; and, crowning all, the unclouded vision of every landmark of time in the light of an old-new focus-point for the beginningless behind and the endless before of a God-inhabited eternity.

The offerings of praise and prayer in the next two Sections comprise fresh sets of votive chaplets richly redolent with the old perfume of the profoundest type of piety. Remarkable as ever will be seen to be their characteristic qualities of refined appropriateness in sentiment, fervid intensity in emotion, colourful luxuriance in imagery, opulent elegance in diction and far-reaching suggestiveness in thought, whether at personal or domestic sacraments, at ordinary congregational or special commemorative services. And then, what exhaustless resource in the devotional faculty finding for itself each time a new, original pathway of approach to the

God of wonted worship, thus keeping happily away in effect from the routine tracks of the stale and the stereotyped while, of course, closely conforming in spirit to recognised moulds and models! Chief among the choice counters upon the board of holy monition are such sublime lessons as the following :— (1) *As to the vital Value of Religion*. If it has been affirmed that ‘we walk by faith, not by sight’, that is because “Faith is the Light from the flame of Life”. On the individual side, to cultivate Religion in life is to plant and nurture a very Eden in the soul ; whilst, on the collective, “the inmost *me* reaches out unto the inmost *thee* only when Religion is the formative and unitive force.” (2) *As to the real Essence and the genuine Extensions of Spirituality*. The vision is all-in-all in the life of the spirit ; so much so that “to behold the vision, to live the vision and to make known the vision that all may see it -- these mark the distinct stages in the forward march of any religious communion” under the lead, successively, of the prophet, the saint and the apostle. (3) *As to the Interrelation between Individual and National Regeneration*. Whereas “the individual ever remains the type of the nation,” “purity, philanthropy and piety — these constitute, respectively, the basis, the superstructure and the covering of the edifice of human society” (4) *As to the settled Conditions of the Service of Humanity*. Execration and outlawry ‘with diameter and derision’ (in the words of George Eliot) — followed though by eulogium and repatriation in the remote sequel — makes up the ordained lot of the elect regenerators of society ; hence, as Keshub (himself a reformer of reformers)

phrases it, 'persecution is the price due to the world for living above it.' "Not required at the world's banquet in the early stages, the God-devoted, God-serving man is brought back, only later, to give to the world the true 'bread of life', even heavenly manna." (5) *As to the Rule of Growth in Dynamic Virtue*. "It is the gradual building up of character, the ceaseless formation, inch by inch, of the humanity in you, that will alone equip you to decide on occasion whether or not you should dare and do a thing and take the consequences." (6) *As to the Uses of Adversity in bereavement and suffering*. Peerless altogether in its potency, Love "sees further, surveys broader, serves surer than mere intelligence, interest or aught else" and thus attains to the serene certitude :

' 'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all'.

Or, in the more explicit language of another strain of verse,

' He who for love hath undergone .
The worst that may befall
Is happier thousandfold than one
Who never loved at all.

' A grace within his soul hath reigned
Which nothing else can bring :
' Thank God for all that I have gained
By that high suffering.' '

So that, about "the spirit of complaint," you may take it that "It is the most useless wheel of all that creaks."

(7) *As to the Ideal in contrast with the Real.* "The future is much more of a radiant vision than the past is of a realised possession". As such, the child is no mere base-structure but "the very top-storey of an edifice in the making"—at once "the rectification of the parent's mistakes, the realisation of the parent's desires and the fulfilment of the parent's hopes"; and everyone should estimate himself "not by the blunders he makes but by the promise he shows." (8) *As to the true Implications of Social Equality.* The challenging claim all around for "equality of position" is rightly understood only in terms of "equality of opportunity and equality of appreciation" quite apart from innate differences in endowment and aptitude and inevitable disparities in environment and assortment; for, thus alone must 'status' relax into 'contract'. (9) *As to the proper Pathway to the God of Grace.* "Transcending philosophy but available to faith and amenable to love, outreaching speculation yet brought into intimacy through communion, He is our own loving and beloved Lord, the Life of our lives and the Soul of our souls." Accordingly, "in the great journey of life, if we but feel that we are on the Mother's lap, what care we for aught else?" (10) *As to Divine Dealings with Human Deflections.* "God's place is near the sinful man", even as the "doctor's place is near the sick man." "Herein lies His true greatness, His matchless majesty, that, while in Himself limitless and boundless, He yet descends for our salvation into every little nook and every small corner of space and time." "The grace of God, according to universal testimony, is found most abounding where it is least

deserved." He "chastises only to chasten and afflicts only to strengthen." "God is righteous, not to condemn, but to save. The Saviour is the Healer." (11) *As to the right Meaning of the Manifestations of Natural Law.* Not to be construed as practical negations of Love or as penal visitations for human iniquity are "all the cosmic manifestations on the field of Time" in the terrific aspects of Natural Law, but rather as arresting evidences of that absolute, abiding Love which expresses itself even through the irrefrangible constancy of Law. (12) *As to the Intercommunion of Divine Dispensations.* God is the God of Harmony, the Harmony of the Dispensations of all times and climes, faiths and fellowships; and consequently, "once we are led by Thy grace into the harmony of Thy truth, all prophets become Thy messengers, all sages Thy standard-bearers and all scriptures the mirrors of Thy self-revelation." And so on and so forth; for here must be resisted the fascination of multiplying such exquisite cullings from a ravishing garden of more than common fertility and fragrance. Before emerging, however, from the Sections under consideration, the good reader will not fail to be deeply moved, in particular, by every word of the *Usha-keerthan* Prayer of the very last Birth-day upon earth, that of the *Maharnavami* of 1938 entitled "The Mother's Grace in the Gift of Life" and now rendered instinct with a sombre interest peculiar to itself. "Matters it not whether this be my last Birth-day here below or whether any further expression of grace in terms of time await this humble individual. Beyond all doubt is the fact of Thy mercy." Solemn accents these which shall

continue to thrill through the ringing grooves of change for long generations amongst us! Also, on the side of international nemesis on the hectic passion for the veneered policy of "territorial acquisition", the searching, scathing, criticism of the professed "Protection of the Aborigines" (1915) will be read with a heavy heart not only as a grim commentary upon the cataclysm of a quarter-century ago but also as a gruesome presage of the conflagration of today in 'the red fool-fury' over the Vistula together with all the intervening happenings between then and now. "Europe has made herself guilty of atrocities for which, without assuming any superiority, we may say she is now paying dearly."

The transition from the *lyra mystica* of the two middle Sections to the *lyra heroica* of the last brings the patient peruser on to renewed participation, after the preceding Maharshi Devendranath and Pandit Veeresalingam memorial services, in the offering of the gold of gratitude, the frankincense of reverence and the myrrh of homage to the illustrious Founders of the two Protestant Theistic Churches of Modern India and to the two glorious Exemplars of the exalted Ideal in the worthy sire and the worthy son of the Tagore stock. Rajah Rammohun Roy, the 'man of a thousand years,' is once again vividly depicted in the beauty of symmetry and harmony characterising his purposively first-hand and lifelong quest after the essential unities of human nature and thereby of human thought and aspiration, endeavour and experience — a tricolour picture of the reawakener, the reconciler and the reorganiser.

Swami Dayananda Saraswathi is fittingly visualised in his "transcendental altitude" hurling Luther-like defiance, with 'God and I against the whole world', in the safe-guarding of historic continuity by conserving out of the past "all that these advanced times have brought home to you as fundamental to progressive life." Both are thus related as "prophets of a new type" with an all-round view of the concrete whole in its multifarious phases. While "Rammohun helped to put an end to *Sati*" and "laid the seed out of which grew the Widow Marriage Act," "Dayananda laid emphasis on *Brahmacharya*" and "planted the seed out of which has come the Sarda Act." About Devendranath, one of humanity's mystic-saints "endowed with a most vivid conviction of, and a most enraptured companionship with, God, as witnessed in a life of God-possessed, God-intoxicated beatitude", the story is inspiringly retold of the clear-marked stages in the pilgrim's progress "from one who glimpsed the Eternal Beauty into one who felt himself and the whole world transfigured by a Heavenly Glory." And therein is encouragingly found a fresh testimony, even in these latter days, "to the rich possibilities of India's spiritual culture" —not to be exclusively identified, however, with Hindu culture in view of Modern India being "a composite of several cultures." And finally follows the running commentary with which is happily commended the Telugu version of a choice collection from the Seer of Santiniketan's priceless discourses in aid of "prayerful meditation and soul-deep devotion" with their unique charm of "rich imagery and poetic grace."

At the end of the Volume will be found a new feature in the Appendixes setting out the Master's considered and independent opinions upon the vital issues of Educational Reform and the burning question of Temple Entry Enactment. It will be observed how the spirit of perfect courtesy and the manner of persuasive cogency suffer not the least impairment even through the voice of enforced dissent, and also how the contribution to the discussion in each case represents views at once judicious, liberal and advanced as regards, for instance, the Indianisation of the Educational Service with improved inducements, the protection of the 'Affiliated' Mufassal Colleges, the unification of Elementary and Primary Education with the elevation of Higher Elementary into Middle Grade Schools for the behoof of rural youth, the vocationalisation of the Secondary courses of study with the vernacularisation of instruction in non-language subjects and the establishment of a Secondary and Intermediate Board distinct from the Universities. As for the proposal to force open the Temple-door with the hand of the Legislature, absolute sympathy with the motive does not carry with it an unquestioning acceptance of the soundness of the method. From the stand-point assumed, this latter is discountenanced as involving an infringement of the principle of religious neutrality in directly seeking to compel communion in the face of aggressive non-conformity instead of the policy hitherto pursued of only mediately guaranteeing the unchecked practice of every one's religion according to his own personal conviction. It is also discounted as calculated inexpediently

to arouse acute and extensive cleavages and conflicts not easy to grapple with in effect.

Here, the closing word must point heartily to the heavy debt of gratitude owed to the good purveyors of the pabulum served up in several of these courses—the late Mr. M. Ramamurti in the case of Sec. 1—No. VII, and Sec. 3—Nos. VIII — XXXIV; Mr. P. Sattirazu in regard to Sec. 1—No. VIII, and Sec. 2—Nos. IV and V; and Mr. C. Sitaramamurti, M.A., in respect of Sec. 1—Nos. II and X, Sec. 2—No. VII, Sec. 3—No. II, and Sec. 4—Nos. II and III. Mention has also to be made of the kind permission accorded by Mr. A. Chelamayya to reproduce in Sec. 4—No. V the Foreword to his Translations of Rabindranath's '*Santiniketan*' Discourses.

Two tenderly affecting reflection uppermost in the mind call (even clamour) for utterance by way of purely personal reference at the present stage in a long-drawn labour of love. But for the bar of manifest presumption, the first thought may perhaps be episodically indicated by what happened once between Tennyson and Rudyard Kipling. The former praised the latter's rhapsody on *The English Flag* and received the following answer to his letter of commendation:—'When the private in the ranks is praised by the general, he cannot presume to thank him, but he fights the better the next day.' So, in the past, the ever-forthcoming overgenerosity of the Master's unqualified approbation on each occasion in despite of a palpable abundance of

detracting blemishes in execution would help immensely to nerve up strenuous effort the more over each succeeding Volume. As it now turns out, however, the withdrawal of that valued source of invigoration from without must perforce throw the heart-broken Editor in upon himself alone with a yet urgent sense of duty within as to the still outstanding obligation about the *Literaria* and the *Life and Letters*. Then, subject to the same bar as the first, the second thought may as well be hinted at through Plutarch's averment regarding his own classic performance. 'It was,' he said, 'for the sake of others that I first undertook to write biographies; but I soon began to delight in them for myself, endeavouring, to the best of my ability, to regulate my own life and to make it like that of those who were reflected in their history, as it were, in a mirror before me'. Ah, both start and supervision being identical each with each in the motif, what blessedness, indeed, should accrue to the unworthy Editor if vouchsafed some little measure of real assimilation of the priceless *Message and Ministrations* in the result! *Om Thatsath!*

Maharavami, }
21st October, 1939 }

V. RAMAKRISHNA RAO

ADDRESSES
AND
ARTICLES

Om !

I

A PLEA FOR PRAYERFULNESS IN YOUTH '
(1910)

It is but proper that you address yourselves to a scrutiny of the source of that trusting hope and that cheerful brotherly relation to all which constitute the sweetness as well as the soundness of character. At this very interesting point in life, the great factors of character should be eagerly sought, sedulously cultivated and rightly trained. If my humble experience in this behalf is of any avail, the cultivation of a reverent, prayerful, charitable, trustful disposition is the happiest, the finest preparation, at this stage of life, for the grand future open to every soul. Therefore, let me earnestly invite young men and young women to open the inner eye to the relations of life and begin to realise the supreme truth that man is neither ephemeral nor isolated nor wholly material nor entirely commercial. The guarantee of true success lies in gripping the solemn truth that beyond the span of a brief youth extends a vast hereafter and the former is not merely the accidental antecedent of, but a divine preparation for, the latter. Man, let me repeat, is not a single, insulated object completely detached from other entities. But whether he chooses to cooperate or unfortunately elects to resist,

* A talk to the Young Men's Prayer Union, CoCanada,

there is around, underneath, above, a unifying process regularly at work in and through God. One cannot, therefore, too early lay to heart the lesson that, in all ages as in all countries and under all conditions, the secret of progress and the spring of joy consist in conscious cooperation with that universal process. Hence the duty incumbent to this end upon every young man and every young woman of cultivating the habit of Divine Worship. The essential thing is not anything like set prayers at stated hours but a solemn mood, a holy temperament, a sanctified spirit, a heavenly outlook, like the perfume of the flower ever attaching to the pollen and spreading around wherever it goes. Thus alone life becomes a pregnant seed for the great hereafter to reap the harvest of true honour, the only right thing man can covet. The prayer of today bears fruit only years hence. But the prayerful life continues to shine like the glowing star amid all vicissitudes. This Prayer Union, then, shall be a humble institution striving in a limited way to reach a few young persons with the message I have essayed so imperfectly to enunciate. Heaven's light be the guide of all the seekers of the life divine !

Om ! Thath sath !

II

THE 'YOUNG THEISTS' FRATERNITY': IDEALS AND IMPLICATIONS * (1938)

It is certainly a welcome invitation that I should be asked to address a few words to you. My initial difficulty is about how to greet you. It would be formal if I said 'Ladies and Gentlemen'. It would not be formal but somewhat out of date if I called you 'Sisters and Brothers'. My heart's true attachment and genuine association will, however, be indicated when I say to you, 'Beloved, hopeful ones'. You are dear to me as my beloved ones and precious to me as my hopeful ones. I hold you dear to my heart; and therefore are you the beloved ones. I attach incalculable value to your lives; and thus are you the hopeful ones. All that I solemnly believe in is latent and impregnated in your souls. It is the natural desire of every one like me whose face is turned to the setting west that all that is precious and prayerfully wished for might be continued, perpetuated, amplified by those who should come after him. It is with this faith, namely, that in you is treasured up the benediction of God upon our future work, that I call you 'the hopeful ones' of my heart.

*Address to the Young Theists' Fraternity at Brahmaj. pasana Mandir, Cocanada (21-8-'38).

What is it I should specially lay stress upon at present? The name of the Institution which has claimed you for its own is 'The Young Theists' Fraternity.' It is the last word here that is of the greatest significance to us—'*Fraternity*'. There are various names to indicate how several people are banded together: some call it a 'club,' some an 'association,' some others a 'society,' still others an 'academy', and so on. All that is utterly secular, wholly concerned with the social relations of the individual man. The name 'Fraternity' is sweet, sanctifying, hallowed. That denotes an affinity that truly and inseparably amalgamates all into one spiritual Home—under Heaven one Family, under God one Brotherhood, under Providential Guidance one Band of Pilgrims. It signifies that you are related to one another through a certain link and bond which is a part of your being. If that link is broken, you do not so much as stand even as individuals; if that bond is snapped, you become null and void. It is an attachment that not merely holds you all together but interfuses you with one another so much so that the result would be nullity in the absence of fraternity.

You call yourselves the 'Young *Theists*' Fraternity.' You are members of one family in the consanguinity of a spiritual relationship which should endure through life and infuse itself into, and interpret itself in, all the concerns of life. You should feel that the weal of every one is the weal of every one else amongst you in the life of the Spirit. This Fraternity shall have for its

cementing force all the vital value of Theism — the belief in the One Supreme God, the One who is the all-embracing, all-permeating, all-sanctifying Spirit. He is the equal Parent of all. Far off in the dim past when man was a few steps above the animal, he looked up to the starry heavens and said : 'I am the happy heir of all this universe. This vast immensity of worlds is mine. I am the child of Him who is the Progenitor of all that is.' In whatever form this ancient faith finds itself restated, man is not a creature of the day but a pilgrim through eternity. Whenever we feel we have to expand and enlarge ourselves in any direction—growth of mind, vivification of conscience, strengthening of will—this belief that 'I am the offspring of the Eternal One, the Universal Sire of all,' this and this alone can provide the adequate ground and guarantee of all such progress towards perfection. With this firm conviction, open the eye, and you see God; keep the ear alert, and you hear God; exercise any of the other faculties in you, and you find God — find Him really pouring into you through every pore, through every vein, of your being. It is that Theism that makes you a Fraternity. You—why not I say 'we'?—are a Fraternity because of being deeply embedded in that Faith in God. We are here together around His footstool because we are His children. If, therefore, you are a Fraternity with all your kith and kin, none is a stranger or an alien while that Fraternity is seen to originate in, and be sustained by, a deep conviction of oneness in the One Only God of all.

Then, one more thing. Man must be a *youth* always. He must be always hopeful and always self-reliant. He must evermore look forward and evermore lend himself to others. His destiny is to grow from more to more. Youth cannot think of decay ; youth must needs turn always towards the glory of the rising sun.

To sum up, youth inspired by Theism and unified into Fraternity—this constitutes the Young Theists' Fraternity. The Young Theists' Fraternity is like that spring which lies invisible beneath the surface yet with its quickening freshness. You have only to touch it gently ; it will flow over perennially, inexhaustibly. That artesian well, a very reservoir of the waters of life, can be found when the crust has been bored in. Your hearts have to be opened out, and your souls lit with faith and trust. That makes man eternally living and incessantly aspiring. Young in soul, Theists in spirit, a Fraternity in love — thus you are the Young Theists' Fraternity. You have the charter of God Himself to be living always the life of youth, the life of Young Theists. In you there can be no doubt, no wavering, no backsliding, no despair. It is ever an onward march, strenuous, hopeful, loving, all-embracing. May God grant that this may be realised by the dear ones of this Fraternity !

III
BIRTH-DAY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS *
(1930)

Esteemed President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It may be an utterly graceless thing in me, if I do not feel, and give some expression to the feeling, that I am deeply grateful for all the kind words said about me on this occasion. There is an old story — I am notorious as a story-teller — that a certain *guru* had two *chelas* and amongst them there arose a discussion as to how much of goodness there was in this world. The *guru* was rather astonished at the divergent opinions expressed. Therefore he said, 'It is no good your theorising here. You will both go out into the world and see for yourselves how much of goodness there really is in it. You go to the east, and you to the west, and survey the whole situation in person'. So one went to the east and the other to the west; and they came back. 'Well; you have seen the world. What do *you* think the world is like?' One says, 'Master, I have seen, studied and tried to understand things as they are. There is none good except myself.' 'Well, what do *you* say?' Then the other — 'I don't know how to contradict my elder brother; but my own conclusion is that

* At the Thanksgiving Service and Public Meeting in the Town Hall, Pithapuram, on Sixty-eighth Birth-Day, Principal A. Chakravarti, M A., L.T., Government Arts College, Rajahmundry, presiding (1-10-30),

everybody is good except myself'. *There* is the difference between one temperament and another. And that is what I am reminded of in the present context. Everybody is pleased to think I am a good man ; and the only dissentient is myself. There are occasions like the present when one could devoutly wish that others saw one as one saw oneself. Then I believe in my humble life would be realised what the Duke of Wellington observed about himself : ' When my diaries come out, my statues will come down ! ' All the same, I am profoundly thankful for the goodness, the grace, the generosity of spirit which has expressed itself in the altogether unmerited eulogy of this all too humble individual. And the only way in which I can render thanks is to humble myself before my God and say, ' Do Thou make me, at least to a certain extent, deserving of the praise thus bestowed. Overlook the past, forgive the present and deign to make at least the future somewhat compatible, somewhat in agreement, with the generous things so kindly said.'

Now, Dr. Ramakrishna Rao, as Editor of this new volume *just 'presented', desires that I should read out some portions of it here. It must, no doubt, be a very agreeable task for one to read one's own productions before the public. That is a practice in vogue, particularly in the West, as a means of advertisement. The author reads, and people come to hear how he reads ; and so the success depends on the way of reading. I fear, in this instance, my reading may only mar

* *Message and Ministrations*, Vol. IV

instead of improving. Nevertheless for all the trouble—and I know far more than any one the measure of that trouble — which Dr. Ramakrishna Rao has taken in his Editorship, I shall, in appreciation of that trouble, just accede to his wish. There is one portion I should like to read first, which will make the Editor bite his tongue for having at all asked me to give some readings and will impel him to feel that he has caught a Tartar here ! The First Volume, got up quite behind my back, was somehow not inscribed to any one ; but it has all along been associated in my mind with my ever-venerated spiritual *Guru*, Pandit Sivanath Sastri. The Second Volume was inscribed to him to whom with my esteemed friend, Principal Chakravarti, I bow ever in soul-deep reverence as my *Pradhanacharya*. The Third Volume was inscribed to him whom I have honoured myself by honouring always as my ever-trusted *Nayaka*. And now, the Fourth Volume is inscribed to two whose names, though not specified on the page, are yet sufficiently indicated by the description—the twain unto whom this whole achievement, for what it is worth, owes no end of debt.

[Here the ‘Inscription’ was read out.]

Then, the next thing I would like to read is one in agreement with the noble ideal so happily stressed in the presidential remarks. It is from a discourse entitled “Religion and World-Peace.”

[Here were read out extracts from the piece mentioned.]

Lastly, another passage I have a great mind to read, if I have not managed already to overtax your patience, is on a theme always dear to my heart even on the principle of, as it is said in Latin, *lucus a non lucendo* (light because no light in it) !

[Here was read out the 'Meditation' on "Chastity and Celibacy."]

I shall not presume to tax you further. It is only in deference to the wishes of the Editor that I have drawn upon your indulgence so far. I shall now conclude by invoking God's choicest blessings upon all those who, out of pure generosity of heart, have spoken so very flatteringly about me. I know it is the sincere thought of their mind that they have expressed. But I feel so overwhelmed by the consciousness of my own unfitness to receive their compliments that I can only wish that God in His great mercy might enable me to acquire a little of that virtue to which alone their praise can be properly due. I gratefully thank also all those who have been organising these yearly gatherings. It is dear to my heart to remember and realise that there are so many who wish well of me. I invoke His choicest blessings on one and all. Blessed, blessed, blessed be the name of the Lord !

IV
WELCOME TO REV. M. C. RATTER*
(1931)

Praised and glorified be the all-wise, all-loving, all-sanctifying and all-blessing God who alone has brought us here together ! It is only out of His mercy that such truly significant occurrences are brought about to demonstrate the unity of human nature and the universality of Divine inspiration. Blessed be our God that time and again even in our day He has graciously granted unto us the witness and evidence of one truth informing all earnest minds, one love pulsating through all feeling hearts, one beauty thrilling and enrapturing all that, with an inner sense of the charming and the uplifting, have attuned their souls to the great harmony of the world ! The true, good, gracious, beautiful, adorable God — He is the universal God of all ; and it is verily out of His own mercy that we are here this evening.

We praise and glorify Thee, the Teacher, Inspirer and Sanctifier of all ; and we beseech Thee to fill us with a vivid sense of Thy holy presence in us, with us and about us. Our souls reverently adore Thee even for this happy and holy opportunity of knowing and realising how Thou art the One God of all times and climes

* At the Brahmopasana Maudir, Cocanada (23-2-'31).

and we are one fraternity and one congregation in Thee unto Thy glory. May our hearts find satisfaction, strength and joy in receiving the message that will be addressed unto us through Thy son and servant ! Blessed be Thy name now and for ever !

Friends,

The hand-bill which I dare say you have seen makes, very wisely and appropriately, no provision for a chairman. If I intervene with a few words, it is not to function as the presiding mind but to discharge the humble duty of a prelude to the coming joy.

Our esteemed brother comes to us, as you have noticed, in the capacity of a representative of the Unitarian and other Liberal Churches of England. Our first word now and here is a word of sincere thankfulness to the Association that has, with such an admirable sentiment of fellowship and fraternity, deputed him to come and stay amongst us and get into touch with our life and institutions and help, under God, to forge one more link of union between our sisters and brothers in the West and ourselves. Our brother here, for his own part, has, as I feel, shown real kindness to us in having agreed to come to India in response to the call from his own Association as well as our invitation from the Brahma Samaj. I do not profess to know much about him ; but what I have come to know so far has inspired in me a genuine sentiment of regard and esteem. I shall mention one or two incidents in

his life which will appeal to us all. You remember that terrible war which not long ago devastated a whole continent and portions of other continents. England then declared conscription and enjoined on every adult to serve her cause by taking up arms. Those who, as pacifists, could not and would not obey were clapped up in jail. The majority thought they were traitors. Mr. Ratter was one of those traitors ; and he suffered imprisonment for one and a half years. So, you see, imprisonment for such recalcitrant beings is not a peculiarity with India alone. The temper in which our brother took the incarceration was, indeed, remarkable, as it must be when one is prepared for it for not consenting to fight one's brother-man. He did not say they were oppressors who declared conscription. What else could the nation do ? But on his side, his duty was clear ; and he did it. That shows both strength of conviction and reach of imagination. Again, Mr. Ratter is one who has been associated with various humanitarian movements and has come into vital contact with youth organisations. Himself, according to Western computation, a young man of thirty-one, he has seen a deal of the aspirations and activities of other countries and nations. He is now a minister, not merely a member, of the Unitarian denomination — let me add, not a born Unitarian but one led by the light of God out of the Trinitarian Baptist Church into the Unitarian communion for the sake of conviction and in disregard of consequence. Stopford Brooke, whose name is familiar to us all, had been a clergyman of the Established Church and was going away into the

Unitarian fold. Some of his friends wanted to dissuade him from that step of secession. Dean Stanley, a leading member of the Broad Church party, said, 'The Church is itself growing more and more liberal now-a-days; why need you quit it?' 'Has the Church grown liberal enough to make Dr. Martineau the Archbishop of Canterbury?' 'I fear, not'. 'Oh then, the Church is not liberal enough for me.' Such are the pilgrims along the path of righteousness prepared to go out of old moorings, not in defiance, not in callousness, but with lingering affections and attachments and yet loyal to the royal in them — men who deserve to be honoured on all hands and followed at every step.

One noteworthy point is this. Mr. Ratter has not come to convert us to Unitarianism. For he believes in the communion of spirit with spirit — not in proselytisation from one faith to another but in progress from the narrower to the larger faith. Such is his love for India that I am confident his visit will do good in unknown circles and unnoticed corners — in places and spots where dwells the eye of God. As brother unto brother, he is welcome, in common reverence to the One Father of all, as he comes from the western to the eastern wing of that Father's home. Very casually, he has just used a phrase which quite shows his own inner disposition. The Brahmos, he has said, are Indian Unitarians and the Unitarians British Brahmos. That is a clear index to the perfect level of equality on which these two Bodies stand. We may have some secondary distinguishing marks mostly due to tradition. But the

rock-bottom reality is that we do stand together side by side, shoulder to shoulder and heart to heart.

In the name of the members and sympathisers of the Brahma Samaj and those that appreciate genuine devotion, I welcome our dear brother into our midst. I am sure God will bless his work. He has kindly promised to speak to us on three evenings. The first of these discourses will tell edifying things to strengthen our faith in the youth of all countries and nations and bring home a special appeal to the rising hope of India. Here I shall stop my rambling remarks with a request that our brother may now deliver his opening address which I add, as an anticipatory token of thankfulness, will surely sharpen by far our appetite for what is to follow.

V
BIRTH-DAY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS*
(1934)

Sisters and Brothers, .

It is my bounden duty, and it is also rightly expected of me, fully to acknowledge with the heartiest gratitude and with the warmest affection all the generous sentiments and all the gracious good-wishes that have been conveyed to me on this solemn occasion. I beg leave to assure you that in this essential aspect of devout gratitude, there is absolutely nothing wanting in me. But, for more reasons than one, it is not possible for me to call to aid many words to give expression to my ideas and feelings. The first, a purely physical reason, is my present indifferent health which makes it hard, if not impossible, for me to acknowledge at length all the kindness that has been evinced by these dear ones towards me. Secondly, the very generous sentiments expressed on this occasion have been so overwhelmingly liberal as to render anything like an appropriate and adequate acknowledgment out of the question. I should be one of the most self-sufficient of creatures under the sun, if I imagined that even a tithe of all that had been said in

*At the special Thanksgiving Service on the occasion of the Seventy-second Birth-day Celebrations at Pithapuram Palace (16-10-'34).

praise of me actually corresponded to the fact in me. I am oppressively aware of my own unfitness for such encomiums. The third and the most oppressively forbidding reason is that just now I am simply, literally, overpowered by the saddest of feelings. After that fatal happening, that irreparable bereavement, of the 12th of February 1933, this is the first occasion we meet at a place from which a great light and a sweet music have departed. My tongue is tied, my heart is on the rack, my soul is bereft of all joy and solace, as I cannot but recall that tremendous occurrence. Accordingly, you will forgive me if I find myself unable to say much at present beyond one or two necessary words of self-expression.

Not in the conventional attitude of reciprocal appreciation but in the spirit of a genuine satisfaction of heart, it is to me a most gratifying experience to note that my beloved child (or grand-child), the Yuvarajah, has borne such affectionate testimony to what he believes is some modicum of worth in me. It is loving kindness that always sees virtues where the common view has none indeed to find. And here, by reciprocal understanding, himself calling me his dearest grandfather and myself cherishing him as my beloved grand-child, if what all he finds appreciable in me come to be reproduced in him, I shall feel my life amply blessed.—As to the others also who have spoken on this occasion, I can only say that they, likewise, have brought the eye of love to bear upon their estimate; and because they have seen things through the medium of charity

alive to much goodness and blind to the gravest demerits, therefore alone they have been pleased to find so many laudable features in such a lowly being. — My esteemed friend, Jagannadhaswami garu—I may claim him as my honoured brother — has this day made me feel thankful to God that I have been permitted to impress upon him that religion is life and that work and worship must go together.—As for my brother, Lakshmi Narasimham garu's high encomiums, he has seen in me virtues in an amplified and magnified form which I cannot ascribe to myself. With reference, in particular, to one thing, his praise of what he calls a life of pure, flawless monogamy, what can I say, how may I appropriate the compliment to myself, with the living presence of Dr. Ramakrishna Rao before me? What am I before him? I may never have on this side of mundane existence another opportunity of acknowledging it. So I take occasion most gratefully now and here to own how his remarkable example has been a lifelong inspiration to me along the footsore path of strict monogamy. — Then, turning to the interrelation between Sri Maharajah garu and myself, whatever you may say, you cannot adequately express the truth about it; nay, you will be only at the outermost fringe of the whole affair. It is the literal truth, the bare truth — and I say this with God as my witness—that he and I have been drawn intimately together so much so that it is not common, sentimental indulgence but the bare, simple reality that he has been unto me a child of my heart so dear and so precious that our heart-strings have come to be inextricably interwoven.

In his will — I say this without betraying any confidence — he wanted to make provision of a house for me after him. I said, ‘A house for me after you ! No; where will remain the need for a house for me then ?’ That is an external symbol, an outer revelation, of the depth of feeling between us both. No one can probe into the depth, the profundity, of that relationship. Nay, we ourselves do not know how miraculously deep it is — neither he nor myself. It is God alone that knows how deep it is. Beyond all calculation and so welcome to the heart, all that I hold dear is dear to him, and all that he holds dear is dear to me. Whatever one may say about our mutual relationship, it cannot but be far, far below the truth, an underrating of the fact. May that relationship grow beyond life into eternity !—Again, I am most happily thankful for one other aspect of this gathering with its expressions of goodwill and good-wishes. Year after year, some particular person connected with the Brahma Samaj is being invited to conduct this special Thanksgiving Service. This year, it has been the part of my esteemed sister, Srimati Jnanamba garu — she will not like to be called otherwise than as my beloved child — to officiate on this occasion. To me it has been a balm and a blessing that she has conducted the service and said all that she has said. As a well-wisher of the Brahma Samaj, I feel profoundly thankful to God that He has brought a lady of her talents and her devotion to the service of the cause of the Brahma Samaj. May the noble work she has been rendering bear ample fruit far surpassing our prayers and expectations !

Now, my last word is this. If, after allowing for all kind conventions, there is yet at the core a small modicum of truth in what my honoured friends have said today, I devoutly pray you to note the fact that what little worth there is in me is due to God, the great Care-taker of every soul. Not one among the countless millions of creatures in the universe lies beyond the range of the light and the reach of the guidance of God. Wherever there may be seen a grain of truth and fact and virtue, do you render thanks, pre-eminently, to God for it. If I may leave one word with you as a farewell message, let it be this: through all vicissitudes in life, clouds may gather, lightning-strokes may bear down dear ones, troubles may fall thick in torrents; yet, believe, not merely think but believe, hold it as a postulate, that the Eternal Arms are for ever outstretched around every one of God's children; and therein lies redemption, therein lies sanctification, therein lies glorification also. Though with a sin-sulliced voice, yet in the name of the God of all love and forgiveness, let me pray that He may vouchsafe unto you the fullest measure of that faith and that trust. God bless you, one and all! I most sincerely and heartily thank you for having come in large numbers to give me the happiness of your company and your blessing on this day.

VI
REPLY TO THE
MASULIPATAM CIVIC ADDRESS*
(1929)

Gentlemen and Friends,

This altogether unexpected and, without any self-depreciation on my part, undeserved honour which the Chairman and Members of the Masulipatam Municipal Council have been generously pleased to accord to me commands, nevertheless, my warmest appreciation and profoundest gratitude.

Speaking in this place, I must needs, if for no other reason than the one consideration that we meet here under the auspices of the Municipal Council, necessarily confine myself for the present, in the expression of a sense of responsive thankfulness, to my very early and never-flagging interest in, and affection for, the Municipal Council of Masulipatam. That interest and that affection date back to several years in the past. It may not be within the knowledge of many here present that during the second period of my stay in this dear old place, that is, as a member of the staff of Noble College, I had the privilege of being a member of this Council for a number of years. I do not know what the present position is. But we were

* On 22-11-'29.

then really a mutually appreciative, warmly loving and regardful body. It might be that our activities then were not so manifold or vigorous as yours are now. Yet, in sustaining the spirit of cordiality amongst ourselves, I venture to think, we were behind none of the past or present Councils. The most powerful individual contribution to harmony and geniality of relationship was made by our universally respected Chairman, Mr. Maiden. He threw himself into the affairs of the Council with whole-hearted zeal. We differed sometimes in our opinions; but there was never the slightest remnant of ill-will. We felt sure Mr. Maiden must mean well, however much his procedure was found open to question. For several years he held this very respectable office with single-hearted devotion to duty. I have untold pleasure, indeed, in meeting him amongst my old friends on this occasion.

I may tell you just one or two things which spontaneously come to my mind as I think of the days I spent at Masulipatam as a Councillor. On a certain day, I wrote to Mr. Maiden to enquire whether we had no House-tax appeals at all for disposal, seeing that there was quite a crop of Profession-tax appeals to be heard. With irresistible humour, he wrote back to say that there was a huge bundle of those appeals but he was unable to pitch upon any Councillor who had the time and the patience to go through them and investigate into their merits in this town of long distances. 'If you are zealous, you may please undertake the

task', he kindly added. I readily offered to do it. It gave me three days' drive through the town, taking me into interior places of which I had had no knowledge before. I had the satisfaction of presenting my humble opinion after a personal inspection of each one of the cases. The report put up was generously appreciated and accepted by the Council, even as I had been greeted in more places than one with the over-respectful welcome, 'తమదయచేసి నారా ? మాబోటివాండ్రకు తప్పక న్యాయం కలుగుతుంది.' Some of my colleagues on the Council afterwards assured me, though, that I had been successfully duped in several instances. Anyhow, that is one reminiscence of my Municipal work. Another experience more stirring was this. The local sweepers and scavengers in a particular situation went into a general strike with an outcry for less work, more pay and longer brooms. I happened to be absent in Madras. The Council heeded not the demands of the strikers and resolved that unless they resumed their work in the usual manner, they would be replaced by recruits from outside. I came back at that juncture. My house was soon besieged by the sweepers and scavengers. I pleaded with Mr. Maiden for the holding of a special meeting of the Council. He said, 'If you can, you may obtain the regulation number of requisitions'. I went from Councillor to Councillor. The signatures wanted were got. The meeting was convened ; the resolution was modified ; and the conditions were made satisfactory. I was rewarded in two ways. Every one thenceforth thought I should be his champion irrespective of the virtue of his cause. But people were soon disillusioned.

The scavengers were dealers in mango fruit during the mango season ; and I got from them a decent present of that fine fruit. Then, there is a third point. I beg pardon of the officials here present for my recounting it. I was chosen as the Voting Delegate to vote at the Legislative Council Election at Bezwada on behalf of this Council. I went and came back. Then came the demand for my T. A. Bill. 'What is T. A. Bill ? ', I asked. Now, of course, I am an expert ; but then I did not know. There were alternative ways of preparing the Bill by which I could get Rs. 34 or 57 as I chose. I could not honestly sign the Bill in either form. I said I could draw only what I had actually spent, namely, Rs. 10. But my colleagues seriously put forward the consideration that if I adopted that course, it would later affect their own similar claims. So I eventually persuaded myself not to present any bill at all but to forego even the Rs. 10. Thus peace was made for the time being. As I said, I learnt the ethics of T. A. Bills, however, in course of time. Then yet a novice, I had still to acquire worldly wisdom. Mr. Maiden, always so genial, would every now and then regale us with his Telugu. To a Profession-tax appellant his favourite query would be, 'నీకు భార్య ఉందా ? ' 'చిత్రం ; లేదండి.' 'ఎందుకు పెట్టుకోలేదు ? ' To another the question would be addressed, 'నీకు పిల్లలేదా ? ' 'లేదండి.' 'ఎందుకు చెయ్యలేదు ? ' That way we had our own enjoyments. We did not groan under the burden of duty. Next, as to the amenities of civilised life : Bandar Municipality was but a poor concern in those days. We had not the Water-works of today ; but we were in the frame of mind of

an old dame who, when told of filtered water and its uses, was quite ready with the crushing reply, 'Why, your grandfather lived up to 85 and he could travel so many miles on foot, and all along he drank only pure pond-water.' However, I do congratulate you upon the many brighter aspects of municipal life that are yours today.

I must solicit your kind indulgence as I proceed briefly to refer to some of the personal notes in the Address. There is a well-known verse which embodies the wish that God should give us the eye with which others see us. Then, it is thought, the hundred and one holes present in the life and character of a person would be clearly brought out and that each one would see reason to deplore the day he was born. This, however, is an occasion when the poet's sentiment needs to be reversed; for it would seem good that others saw me as I see myself. A good portion of the Address would then be found to stand in urgent need of revision. It is not merely generous but the downright opposite of fact. I am praised as one who has altered and exalted the educational outlook of Andhradesa. Anyway, one little modicum of self-estimation I may be permitted here to make. When I was yet at school, like so many other school-boys I was playing with Napoleon's 'Fortune-teller'. 'What profession shall I follow?' At once came the answer, 'The profession of a schoolmaster'. It was a rare occurrence when the fortune-teller proved true. I became a lifelong teacher. I found work and worship in it. Unto me the school-room was the nursery of the spirit and the school-field the Eden of joy. Therefore,

I was more than satisfied with my profession, devoutly grateful for being called to it. If, through the disposition for which I render thanks unto Him from whom flows all inspiration, any youthful spirits were won over to the pursuit of large sympathies and worthy ideals, it was more a matter of nature expressing itself than of the will working out a plan. As regards other encomiums, I may say here is a pure, simple, undiluted instance of greatness thrust upon a person. It is literally the truth that every one of the distinctions you refer to came not only unsolicited and unanticipated but even as a surprise at the time. When the first title of Rao Bahadur came, I opened the telegram but would not disclose the contents, since I felt inwardly sure that it must have been meant for some other Venkata Ratnam and had only been addressed or delivered to me by mistake. The other titles came similarly. Knighthood came when I was with a friend ; and he observed, "Why, for over one generation already boys have called you ' Sir' ; and how is this a greater compliment now ?" For my part, I am not so squeamish as to disparage any of those distinctions. Since they have come, I only value them at their right worth. They have their own history.

To turn once again to my attachment to Masulipatam. I am proud to tell such of you as do not know it that Masulipatam is my birth-place and I am one of you. I was born here in 1862. I was here one of the survivors of the cyclone which swept over the town in 1864. Even to this day, I am bound by Nature's own

prompting to think affectionately of the place of my birth. Later in life, on two occasions — first, for one year and eight months as a Teacher in the Hindu High School; and next, for five years as a Lecturer in Noble College—it was my good fortune to work at Masulipatam. Thus, the affection felt for the birth-place has all along been so immensely enhanced and so intensely sweetened by the fact that here it was given to me to be greeted, day in and day out, with especial tenderness by those who will continue to be the darlings of my heart. Masulipatam justly occupies a very high place in my esteem, affection and gratefulness.

Commercially, Masulipatam has been in the down-grade. But we shall never forget that Masulipatam is one of the few centres that have held on through centuries. In this world of comparisons, the oak that is two thousand years old looks upon the five-hundred-year old tree as quite an upstart. Well may Masulipatam speak of Madras as an upstart. It was known even to the ancient Greeks by its direct communication with them through its native craft popular as the 'Masula boats'. Commercial venturesomeness and enterprise found its origin and its stimulus here even in the centuries before Christ. In recent history, Masulipatam figured as one of the earliest settlements, if not as the very earliest settlement, of the East India Company. Again, even in far-off Benares, the pious pilgrim from 'Bandar' is still hailed as from a town of ancient name and fame. Hence I fully share in the sentiment voiced by you in praise of my own *janmabhoomi*. Commercially,

we may be going down. But untrammelled by personal or communal differences, we shall retain our ancient position and remain undiminished in our real importance. Here we have the inspiration of tradition to a degree not vouchsafed to other localities. I humbly endorse this claim.

In closing, let me once again most humbly thank the Chairman and Members of the Municipal Council for the great honour done to me this morning. The Civic Address is an institution of recent date in the country. When judiciously employed, it is a proof of two virtues—esteem and regard, catholicity and broad-mindedness. According to the variety of worthies we honour, we prove our own spirits to be keenly alive to the merits of character and the claims of public service. We cannot be sensitive to inspiring suggestions without receiving and reproducing something of that virtue which we esteem. Thus this practice is a desirable one; and it is to be hoped it will be made a wholly wholesome practice. I cannot believe that the right judgment has been exercised in extending the honour to this humble individual; but I am sure and I recognise with the warmest thanks that what judgment might have ruled out, graciousness has decided upon. I cannot but feel moved by, and I shall not forget, the fact that at the kind invitation of the City Fathers — no doubt, an authentic call implying a voluntary association of spirit with the function of the day—so many of my dear old fellow-citizens have been pleased to rally together on this occasion. To them and to those whom

they represent, I tender my most cordial thanks. Now I use the prerogative of an old man and say, 'God bless you all!'

VII
RESPONSE TO THE P. R. COLLEGE TOAST*
(1917)

Esteemed chairman, gentlemen, old *alumni* of the College and present-day brothers,

For the third time I am called upon to acknowledge in terms of heartfelt gratitude the expression of affection, of loyalty and of appreciation from representatives of those that have, through successive decades, received their education within the portals of this Institution. When one of your position, of your culture and of your heartiness of temperament, sir, is pleased to recall reminiscences of almost a generation ago and dwell upon the then conditions of the Institution with pride and gratitude; when to that you are pleased to add the reflection that the Institution, as it now stands, typifies the education and the uplift that this District has been beneficially receiving during the last thirty years, you pay to us, sir, the heartiest and the most precious compliment that can be bestowed upon any body of humble workers like the Staff and the Management of this Institution. It is a matter for sincere pleasure and gratitude to an old teacher like me to

*Toast proposed from the chair by Rao Bahadur T. Vijayaraghavachari, M. A., P. C. S., at the 3rd College Day Celebrations (17-2-'17).

receive these unmistakable tokens of reassuring appreciation that the work done in this and in sister institutions has been making for a happy continuity of progress in these parts. No doubt, the Institution has had ups and downs. For, not only in the physical world but also in the mental and moral world there do occur certain seismic phenomena that ultimately tend to make for strength even through their unbridled violence. Such a phenomenon was what we had a few days back. Now we feel sure that all is making for the welfare of the Institution, which consequently may well exclaim to itself, in the language which the poet has made a flowing brook to use,

‘men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever’.

The Institution has been going on—I place every emphasis on the word ‘on’—on and on and up and up, ever since its foundation in 1852 — a pretty long tract of time to look back upon. We have reason to be thankful to the great Giver of all good that this long tract is neither an arid region nor an unseemly site covered over with brambles but a fertile field of increasing fecundity growing not only in its tenantry from the humble beginning of a few hundreds to the present strength of over sixteen hundreds but in every other direction. In the funds available, in the staff employed, in the facilities provided and in the appliances secured, there has been steady and continued expansion and therefore steady and continued resourcefulness and efficiency. Thanks are due not only to this or that

person who, owing to his academic status, looms large in the public eye but equally, if not more, to those who, as it were, shaded by their towering position, work in the background, thus turning out the substantial, solid work of laying the foundation of all that makes for sound education. To all these humble, lowly teachers of small boys at the bottom of the Institution ; to the lads themselves; aye, to the faithful menial servants who work, not because they are paid for it, not because they are goaded to it, but because they feel that the salts they earn are earned only by faithful work—to all these is due the efficiency of the Institution. On behalf of all these, I render heartfelt thanks for the kindly sentiment of satisfaction and good-wishes to which you have so feelingly given expression. And I join with you in the prayer that the Spirit of Him who chalks out the future and uses the present as the foster-ground of the time to be may vouchsafe unto the Institution many generations of continued progress and prosperity, not merely in the external aspects of numbers or appliances, but in the more substantial respects of a solid education, of a sterling character and of a noble life well-planned to be filled in with lofty doings and loftier aspirations in the after-years following the academic career.

Having acknowledged my humble but sincere gratitude to you and to those whom you represent this day for your kindly feelings and affectionate sentiments, I shall, for a few minutes, dwell upon a few facts—no doubt, isolated facts, but all held together in the unity

of common interest for those that are well-wishers of the Institution. During the year since we last met, the School has received expansion in several respects. This hall in which we are met has been constructed since the last celebration of the College Day. Not that it has been constructed altogether anew but only in place of a smaller, humbler building and has added considerably to the structural convenience and appearance of the blocks. And we have also added two tennis courts to the facilities, very limited and inadequate, for the physical training and recreation of our teeming hundreds. We feel so pent up on all sides that the expansion of playgrounds seems beyond human possibility. We have attempted, though so far no signs appear of a promise of success, to secure suitable grounds elsewhere. I have offered, on behalf of the Committee, to bear expenses to the extent of Rs. 1,000 as groundrent merely for securing certain grounds for football play; but we are unable to secure suitable accommodation. We are told that, unless we add to the proposed figure by another fifty *per cent*, we shall not secure it; but, as I fear, that is not only beyond our means but also beyond justifiable limits. However, even as the rebukes of well-meaning well-wishers are changed into blessings, so the admonition last received from one of the oldest of the old members of the College Day Association, Mr. Chaganti Sundayya Pantulu, has borne some good fruit; and we are able to boast that in the course of the year our boys have secured two silver cups, one here and the other at Vizianagaram. We find the license to boast in that the cup at Vizianagaram was won at a challenge

open to the whole of the Northern Circars. Anyhow, we have been able to add a little to the satisfaction of those who are highly keen on these matters. It is to us a matter of stimulating hope that, if only opportunities were available, we might do grander things in this direction.

There is another point which I may mention for the satisfaction of a good section of those gathered here. For the first time, the S. S. L. C. has been successfully reached by, and the right to join the College classes granted by the University to, a girl-pupil. The daughter of one who rightly deserved and commanded almost universal respect in these parts, Sreemati K. Sundaramma is therefore all the more a source of pride to the Institution and all its well-wishers. I may be permitted to add we propose to send up four girl-pupils next year; and let us hope that they will secure a higher percentage of passes than their fellow-candidates of the other sex. If only we should be in a position next year to say that at least two out of the four had been declared 'eligible', it would be a matter for satisfaction to all interested in female education. Amidst heavy difficulties, these dear children, the girl-pupils, have to pursue their studies in the Institution. Therefore it places an imperative obligation upon all in any way interested in, or concerned with, female education to make their way smooth, cheerful, hopeful and uplifting in this direction. I trust that the unfortunate whisper that now and then seems to articulate itself in a grumble against the admission of these children into

the Institution will, through the prevalence of better counsels, be translated into a happy acclaim of assent and approval. I may, in this connection, state two or three points. Every effort is made, every precaution is taken, every facility is afforded to make the position of these two dozen children not only passable and endurable but secure and comfortable. I am grateful to say that a large majority of the members of the staff not only are alive to their duty but take keen personal interest and responsibility in this direction and cheerfully give up their leisure time and spare hours to bestow special attention upon these pupils and fit them up for the Examination. On this occasion I render my heartfelt thanks to my colleagues who thus justify the education they have received by employing it in the service of those to whom education is unhappily denied but in whose case education must be a greater blessing and beneficent necessity than in the case of members of the sterner sex. I feel thankful and proud to add that their brother-boys in the classes, except a few miscreants here and there — unfortunate exceptions that must be an eye-sore and heart-ache to their own parents — and, in fact, even these exceptions only proving the general rule, our boys by the hundred conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the brethren of beloved sisters. I therefore hope that, as the leaven that silently but effectively leaveneth the moral and social temperament of boys, the presence of a few sisters will do its purifying and sanctifying work and that in their lives will be illustrated the truly chivalrous spirit that will not tolerate a wrong when offered to the

frail but devote itself to the advocacy of their rights. I trust that our boys will grow to be affectionate, sturdy, doughty, pure-minded, noble-hearted boys who see reason to think and feel that even the presence of these sisters—like the glow of the morning dawn, like the freshness of the morning breeze, like the cheer of the morning symphony — has been an enlivening, uplifting, invigorating agency and influence upon their own lives.

One other point I would like to refer to. For the second time in the history of the Institution, one who is purely, wholly, entirely in educational matters a product of this Institution without the supplement of instruction from any other quarter has been invited to a place in the Legislative Council of the Presidency. (Cheers). As in the first case, that of the late-lamented K. Perraju Pantulu Garu (cheers), so also in this second case, that of Rao Bahadur K. Suryanarayana-murthi Naidu garu, the honour has been bestowed upon one to whom the College owes so much for disinterested and painstaking attachment and hearty loyalty, and unswerving devotion. I feel glad we are able to claim that we, too, have some share in blending our voice with other voices that dictate counsels to the Governor. May it be a useful and beneficent share!

For the first time in the history of the Institution an Old Boy of the College has passed the M. L. Examination — in one sense, perhaps the most difficult Examination of all. To me it is a matter for great personal

satisfaction that the young friend who has won the culminating laurels of an academic career is an old student of mine own. It was during my Principalship, if you will permit me to say it with pardonable pride, that he passed the F. A., giving even then a sure promise of the coming achievement by taking a First Class and the only First Class of that year. That Uppuluri Rama Joganna — he will excuse the 'Mr.' — has regularly gone up the rungs of the academic ladder till he has sat at the summit of it, is a matter of pride and gratification unto us and of stimulus and beckoning emulation unto others coming hereafter. God grant him long life and a beautiful, useful, noble, worthy career full of the many elements that go to make a successful man, an efficient citizen and an honoured gentleman! May one of these elements be his unswerving fidelity to, and whole-hearted reverence for, P. R. College! He has this day been appointed Joint Secretary of the College Day Association. I hope — and may the hope be more than fulfilled! — that during his Secretaryship the College Day Association will be a thoroughly established fact. No offence, no disparagement, no lack of appreciation is meant for those who have been working for it for the last two and half years. They have done their best, they have spared no pains, they have left no means unemployed. I somehow feel that the Association has not struck root as it ought to do. It so happens that this, like other institutions of its kind, is showing a tendency more to ramify and expand than either to shoot up or shoot down. — I am thankful, at this point, to be reminded of

another instance that might be included in the list of our achievements. Capt. K. V. Ramana Rao, I. M. S., kept terms in this Institution in the Junior F. A. Class. (Cheers). Here again, it was during my day — you will pardon the reference so often to 'my day'; for, my day as Principal has been the longest in the annals of the College with the exception of that of the first Principal who was more a Head Master — if I may thereby attempt to differentiate myself into a superior category. (Cheers). I have been here for thirteen years. As some people put it, the twelfth year should not be allowed to go without a commotion. That was my *pu-shkaram* and there was quite a 'congregation'! (Cheers). As one friend with a legal tendency put it, it was getting time-barred and there was the risk of my becoming a fixture if twelve years were allowed to pass undisturbed. (Cheers). Anyhow, I have entered on a second lease; and let us settle down to it. Well, that is only by the way. I am so glad we are able to state that out of the two that have got the I. M. S. honours in our parts, one is an old student of our College. Let us hope that in this direction also we shall expand more and more and add to the roll of honour.—I was going to say that the College Day Association ought to strike root. The best way to it is to do two things. We must be incessantly on the look-out to secure a large number of old students right into the muster of the Association. And in the Association there must be a desire stimulated more and more to see and appreciate what work is being done in and through the College. I find that the Association has, like many of its kind, a short period

of a few days' activity and a long slumber of eleven and half months of hibernation. I trust that that energy which was quite a match for the M. L. Examination will be thrown—so far, of course, as it can be spared from the Bar-Room—into the activities of the College Day Association; and Rama Joganna and P. Venkata Ramayya—he will also excuse the 'Mr.', because he, too, is an old student of mine — will turn out good work. It requires energetic work: it requires careful fostering; it requires pruning in certain directions; it requires curbing in certain excesses; it requires stimulating in certain dormancies. All this will have to be done. Rightly or wrongly, the Association has long since adopted a Resolution to have the Principal of the College as the President of the Association; and hence I could not quite understand the first Resolution of this morning to the effect that Rao Bahadur So-and-So should be the President for this year also. When he has first inflicted himself as the Principal of the College, he will also inflict himself as the President of the Association. (Hear, Hear). I suppose it is only an instance of kind recognition. But I confess I have done very little for the Association. If I may say anything in self-defence, it is not wholly, it is not even mainly, my fault (Cheers). Whose fault is it, then? Well, I am not here to apportion blame. Rather, as Mark Antony would put it, 'But here I am to state what I do know'. Let us hope during the year before us the College Day Association will become deeply rooted and will work with greater vigour and become firmly established and abundantly invigorated towards that work which

it ought to do, namely, of drawing and focussing together the sentiments and good-wishes of the old students towards this Institution as regards its growth and prosperity.

· Lastly, I refer, with a sad heart and in just a few words, to the incidents of last year; and that I do for two reasons. Firstly, this is the first time the Old Boys, as a body, meet after that incident. And secondly, I have been — here the President tells me I need not think that I am put on my defence now and need not enter into a defence of myself. I have too much of that military spirit which I have imbibed from my father to be ever put to self-defence. (Cheers). But I would say only one thing; namely, when there is a regrettable occasion like that — and I address myself not to the impulsive few but to the thoughtful many, as I do believe there are such among the old students — my friends, when there is an occasion like that, the consideration that ought to weigh is, not what this or that individual man has merited, but how the College and its efficiency, as it now stands, are going to be affected afterwards. Permit an old teacher to talk in parables — it is the privilege of a teacher to talk in parables. We say justice must be sought under any conditions whatever. But there is a passionate way of seeking justice; and, I may say, there is, too, a compassionate way of seeking justice. There was once a child who was claimed by two mothers. They went to a shrewd Judge. The Judge said, ‘Cut the child into two pieces, and let either mother have a piece’. The

false mother said, 'Yes, do, and let me have my share.' The real mother said 'For Goodness' sake, do not cut the child; allow the child to live. I am happy if the child is safe.' That is also what I say: let the child be safe; let the child be happy; and I shall be happy. (Prolonged cheers). The second parable is this. We say we must do whatever we can for the welfare of an institution. By all means; but we must guard against what we believe to be kindly offices but are done in an unkindly way. There was once a tame bear. The man with this animal was going through a forest. He left the bear by the side of a tree and went to sleep. A number of flies gathered thick on the master's face. The bear wanted just to prevent the trouble to her master. And so, to drive the flies away, she began to scare them away. But the flies gathered again and again. She then thought she must destroy the flies, brought a big stone, dashed it against the flies and smashed the head of the master! So it was not scaring away the flies but breaking the head of the master! (Prolonged cheers). Once again I say for generations my forefathers were military men who said their only defence was, 'My loyalty So my sovereign and my sword for my country!' so my only defence is, 'My loyalty to the Rajah of Pithapuram and my humble services to the College, so long as my God will grant me life and breath.' (Cries of 'Hear, hear' and prolonged cheers). I will never, never enter into any other defence—and that, not to save your feelings but even to assert my innocence. (Hear, hear). The future is in other hands than ours. Let

me, as my last word, appeal to you all as old students of the College to hold dear this Institution—its name, its reputation, its prestige, its usefulness, its resources, its pregnant present, its immense future. And may the good-wishes of all those that are friends of higher education in this country be translated into wise counsels, hearty support, personal cooperation and be ever available to the old boys of the College, to the present boys of the College, to me and my colleagues and to those that may come hereafter — all one in heart, one in purpose, one in endeavour—to further the lasting and truly beneficent interests of this Institution for its welfare, for the strength and joy of our dear mother-country and for the happiness and progress of humanity!

VIII
THE REGENERATION OF
THE DEVADASI COMMUNITY *
(1929)

Sisters and Brothers,

I feel sincerely happy, and I render profound thanks to God, that I am enabled to be present on this occasion. It delights my heart to see this great gathering. This gathering is the very fulfilment of my prayers for many, many years.

When, nearly thirty-five years ago, I went about from one place to another in the Northern Circars, delivering lectures on Social Purity and the Anti-Nautch Movement and trying to establish Associations for promoting those objects, I was hoping and praying for the day when, by God's grace, there would be a great awakening in your community itself. God has since brought my hopes and prayers into realisation ; and to Him I render my most grateful thanks.

On the occasion of one of those lectures at Vizagapatam, my views and opinions were opposed in a learned speech by a gentleman named Lingam Lakshmajji Rao Pantulu garu. He wanted to ridicule my message

* Speech at the Kalavanthula Conference at Vizianagaram, Mr. G. Veeraraghavulu, B. A., B. L., presiding (26-12-'29).

with a short and pointed story. He said he had a *thoorpu-vadu* (eastside fellow) as his servant, which servant, when asked to say '*Bhagavanthudu*', would simply spurt out '*Bogam thandri*!' I noted that story; and when my turn came round to speak, I said that good Laksh-maji Rao Pantulu garu had put into one sentence the substance of my whole message: *Bhagavanthudu* is *Bogamvalla thandri*.' God is the Parent—the Father and the Mother—not merely of the wise and the good; but He is really and particularly the protecting Father and the loving Mother of the erring and the sinning. That was my message then. That is my message to-day also. I am a sinner; and I count it the greatest mercy of God that even to me, the sinner, He is both Father and Mother. In the same way, every one, however erring, however sinning, can say, 'God is my Father and my Mother. I can be better; I can be purer.' Have that faith in yourself. Place that trust in God. And you will feel a new hope, a new strength, leading you on and enabling you to improve in life more and more every day. That is the hope I wish to awaken in you strongly. Let that hope burn as a light before you. Let that hope move as a force within you. Then, that hope in God's mercy and guidance will for ever keep you in the right path, put you to useful service and make your lives happy. That is my brotherly advice to you.

More than twenty years ago, it was my good fortune to help in bringing about the marriage of a girl of your community. She was the sister of a student

of mine at Cocanada. The girl then married is the dear wife of Mr. Ch. Razu Naidu, now a useful, prosperous and benevolent member of society as of the community at Cocanada. That marriage was followed by the marriage of the girl's cousin-sister; and she is the dear wife of our President to-day. Thus one marriage has followed another; and, by God's grace, we have this day scores of instances, all over Andhradesa, of girls drawn away from the unhappiness and sinfulness of the old custom and settled in virtuous and honourable ways of life. This great change has done good not only to your single community but to the whole nation by improving its moral tone and strengthening its moral will. It is thus the duty of all sections and classes to help and cooperate in this good movement.

At present, there are several great movements for the betterment of India—for example, Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability, mass education, complete prohibition of intoxicants and so on. But of all the movements for the uplift of the Indian nation, this movement for the regeneration of the *Kalavanthula* community is, in my judgment, the most important because its direct objective is to purify and strengthen the moral nature of man. Work in this direction is dear to God and will be blessed by Him. Work on and on, I beseech every one of you, to the best of your powers until, by His grace, the entire *Kalavanthula* community is completely drawn out of the old unfortunate custom and become as pure, as good and as honourable as the best section of the Indian nation.

My sisters of the community, you are dear to our *Andhramatha*, to our *Bharathamatha*, to our *Visvajani*. Prove yourselves true daughters of the mother-country and of the Divine Mother.

God bless you all !

IX
THE SYSTEM OF CASTE DISTINCTIONS*
(1890)

My attention was drawn only yesterday to the two learned 'notes' on Caste by "A Native Observer" published in your issue of the 7th instant.

Sharing in the common belief as to the identity of "A Native Observer," I was naturally very hopeful, at first, of finding much suggestive thought in the two 'notes' on what I consider the most important social problem for the solution of this and the coming generation of my countrymen. But the more I thought over them, the more did I wonder as to wherein lay the proof for the 'nationality' and for the 'natural origin' of "caste distinctions" or the folly of 'preaching,' for their slow but sure obliteration. Unable, therefore, to make much of the 'notes,' I have thought fit to elicit further opinion by examining what, in my humble opinion, is a comparison where no similarity exists.

That "each caste constitutes a nationality" is, I think, an assertion that confounds two distinct institutions—social and political. It is the State that

* Contributed to *The Hindu* of 25-2-1890 as by 'An Inquirer' in reply to Rajah Sir T. Madhava Rao, K. C. S. I.,

constitutes a Nation. A nationality is formed by the sum-total of persons that live in a country and under a definite Government; and to claim the privileges peculiar to a nation, the prime condition is to own allegiance to the political principles and powers of that nation. But caste is a purely social distinction, involving rights or obligations with which the body politic is little concerned. Caste pretends to define, not one's privileges or penalties as enunciated by the laws and upheld by the magistracy of a country, but one's relative position in a community with exclusive reference to certain customs, usages and observances whose sole justification, at least in the majority of cases, is tradition or antiquity. Nationalities are framed upon, and guided by, principles which change and develop with the advance of the times, which are altered or modified by the sense and circumstances of the persons constituting that nation. But caste lays down rules of observance which, like the laws of the Medes and the Persians, are unalterable and presumably eternal. It hems people within magic circles that none may trespass; it isolates man from man by Rubicons that none may venture to cross; it fixes for every man a social position that he may never aspire to outsoar; it condemns before hearing. A look into any historical atlas of Europe, where the sense of nationality has always been the strongest, would show that nationalities do, and did, shift places; and the process of naturalisation admits the possibility of a change in one's nationality. But a man's social fate is, according to caste, sealed and settled for him without even his tacit consent,

without even his faintest knowledge. In a nation, recognition goes by one's attitude towards the laws of the land ; in caste, birth is the sole recommendation. The Ethiop cannot change his skin ; nor the leopard, his spots ; nor the *orthodox* Hindu, his caste. A man's nationality depends upon his conduct ; his caste, like the drawings in a lottery, upon luck—upon what Lord Thurlow called “the accident of an accident.”

As a humble but ardent well-wisher of the grand political Institution whose growth the pink and flower of the nation are, with such enthusiastic care, nurturing at present in my fatherland, I instinctively thought of the great National Congress, as my eye caught sight of “each caste constitutes a nationality.” “Then, to which of these numerous nationalities,” I asked myself, “does the National Congress belong ?” The opponents of the country-wide Movement have kindly confined it to the Hindus. But a “Native Observer” would fain narrow it further to one of the many nationalities in which India abounds. Tell it not in the N. W. Provinces, publish it not in the columns of *The Pioneer*, that “each caste constitutes a nationality,” lest Rajah Siva Prasad should rejoice, lest Sir Syed Ahmed should triumph, that a friend in the Congress camp itself differs from, but overdoes, them.

Caste distinctions have, we are told, “a natural and not an artificial origin.” How true to nature they are, is no doubt patent from a perusal of the touching letter from your Gooty Correspondent which was, by

an irony of fate, published almost immediately after the ' notes ' under consideration. If what is stated in that letter be nature, surely, she is a monster " red in tooth and claw." Natural distinctions, as I understand them—subject, of course, to correction—are imbedded in the very constitution of things; they are such as assert themselves radically the same, though modified in growth, at all times and in all countries. They set their mark of difference upon the very nature of objects; and howsoever man may retouch the mark—though here, too, the scope for attention is very limited,—he can never erase it. I should be glad to know if there exists between the various castes any such natural distinction—any hard and fast line of demarcation drawn not by man's but by nature's finger, any trait of character or excellence of quality with which nature herself distinguishes one caste from another. In the meanwhile, I may, I think, legitimately ask why such a *natural* distinction is, like Milton's "particular universal," *special* to India alone in its peculiar aspect of an inviolable social position derived from birth.

Want of space forbids a detailed examination of the illustrations by which these propositions are enforced. With the utmost deference to "A Native Observer," I beg leave to say that, in my humble opinion, those illustrations are either not to the point or, like the Australian boomerang, such as rebound upon the author himself, The division of passengers in railway trains into three classes is ultimately due so entirely to individual

resources and convenience that the “almighty dollar”—a purely *artificial* contrivance—and no natural agency rules in the matter. To bring this conventional division under *natural distinctions* is to give to the latter expression a significance too general to exclude any imaginable classification. The fact is that in railway trains, unlike as in caste, (1) no final, ante-natal settlement is generously made for a man as to his position and (2) no tribune vetoes all possibility of lawful interchange between the classes. The other illustration drawn from B- A.’s, F. A.’s &c., is, in my humble opinion, diametrically opposed to the very fundamental principle on which caste distinctions are based ; for, far from there being any Calvinistic predestination in the matter, the distribution of educational honours depends entirely upon qualification — upon individual merits and acquirements, the fruits of personal effort and exertion. As in a battle-field, each one earns his spurs, because he has taken a lance and borne down a knight. Neither fate nor favour decides the question.

I do not know if “A Native Observer” has not—I say it with all respect—mistaken the object of the *foolish preaching* against caste distinctions. I am afraid to him caste distinctions are coextensive with all possible social distinctions, the total levelling of which appears to him to be the aim of the *foolish preaching* which he condemns. Virtue and vice, intelligence and dulness, activity and indolence, wealth and poverty, position and its reverse — these are differences that have been and will be everywhere ; though, I hope and pray,

several of them might fade away as the dim morning matures into the full light of the meridian. But caste is certainly not of this class.

Caste is (to adopt an expression from a very great person) a self-accepted or a self-inflicted and, therefore, an avoidable evil. It is not a natural but an historical institution—an institution whose origin and growth are due, not to purely natural agencies, but to the contrivances of a community passing through different stages of growth or decay. According to Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt (author of *The History of Civilisation in Ancient India*)—and his views are in the main identical with those of other authorities on the subject—(1) there were no caste distinctions in the Vedic period; (2) they originated in different professions during the epic period when “an inviolable line had not yet been drawn between members of different castes”; (3) the real origin of the system “was lost sight of or ignored in the Rationalistic Period, and a theory was sought for and obtained which made each caste distinct from the rest by its very origin and inherent formation!” The first stage was fitted to the social progress of the time. The second stage was a beneficent requirement of civilisation, only when subject to such safeguards and prunings-off from excesses—that is, the possibility of a free option of profession and intermixture of classes—as would avoid the double danger of waste of talent by monotony or monopoly and the growth of tribal isolation. The third stage in the history of caste — and it is in this form that the system has long been a

upas tree in the lovely valley of Indian social life—is due to invidiousness and iniquity. It is against this Linnæan system of social classification—too superficial to be true and too sweeping to be just;—it is against this Jedwood justice, where the sentence precedes the examination, that every friend of humanity ought to protest.

The radical defect of the present caste system is that it ignores the majesty — the rich native investment, the immense latent capabilities — of the human soul. It does not permit what Smiles calls “peerage from the ranks”; it does not allow that, in the wise dispensations of a benign Providence, the life that begins as a hot-blooded maiden may end as a saintly Magdalene; it does not recognise the fact that kind nature is rich in “full many a gem of purest ray serene” hidden under “the dark unfathomed caves” of obscure birth. In these days of economy when so much is said and written against any kind of waste, few seem to take any the remotest notice of the woeful waste of talents which God generously creates, but man ruthlessly mars by unjust restrictions and invidious distinctions. The loss of individuality, the disunion among our people, the political slavery of India, and a dozen other disadvantages have been traced to the caste system; but none of them is half so ruinous to the nation at large as this cruel blighting, in the seedling, of a possible rich harvest. All the world over, there is one continuous struggle between the Aristocracy of Merit and the Aristocracy of Birth; and every honest effort to file away the heavy,

corroding chains of caste distinctions is an episode in the history of this universal crusade. In conclusion, I apologise to you, Sir, for the length of the letter, and beg leave to repeat that in spite of honest differences of opinion, I have the utmost respect towards "A Native Observer".

X
THE JANUS-PHOENIX OF THE NEW YEAR*
(1937)

Hymn—*Anandamritanamah* ! (Sanskrit)

Thou art the Blissful One, the Immortal One—the *Anandamrita*. That comprehendeth the sum and substance, the essence and the full compass of our devotion. Unto Thee we humbly render our praise and our thanks, our adoration and our glorification, on this New Year's Day. Thou hast created us in *anandam* and designed our career for *amritam*. Born in bliss and eternally bred in immortal companionship with Thee, we are thus the very offspring of Thy Spirit. And even as we are begotten of Thee, we turn to Thee again and again, times without number. We are now and here, as in one fraternity of worshippers, to magnify Thee as that *Anandam* and *Amritam* which evermore sends a thrill of immortal bliss through the complete circle of existence. Do Thou, on this solemn and happy occasion, fill us with the vivid, exhilarating, entrancing, transporting, beatifying sense of Thy immediate presence with us. If so by Thy grace we are quickened into the sense of Thy holy presence, that, truly and verily, shall mark for us the dawn of a new year of new life opening out along the path of bliss

* A talk to the Congregation at Brahmopasana Mandir, Cocanada, on Telugu New Year's Day.

and beatitude through time and eternity. Do Thou vouchsafe unto us Thy living, loving, sanctifying, presence now and for ever. Blessed be Thy name!

Let us all feel how sacred in its holiness and how blessed in its happiness is this dear, dear occasion. This morning, reference has been made to two ideas—the idea of Janus and the idea of Phoenix. Janus turns alike to the past and to the future and takes stock of former achievements and looks forward to fresh aspirations. And Phoenix, seeming to be exhausted with life, prepares its own pyre and burns itself to death upon it but only to be born again out of the ashes; so that its death becomes also its rebirth. These are the ideas signified by those two classic references.

Now, the seasons of spring, summer, autumn and winter are just so many phases of the revolving God, God revolving in the circle of time and presenting divers aspects of His mercy and grace. We with our varying temperaments feel that one season is better than another. Yet in the dispensation of God all the seasons are only variegated expressions of one ever-enduring and self-revealing Providence. But for lusty spring there would be no clearness of fancy to take 'in all beauty with an easy span.' But for luxurious summer there would be no rumination of 'spring's honey'd cud of youthful thought.' But for idle autumn there would be no close-furled wing of contented outlook upon the mists around. And but for pale winter there

would be no experience of the realities of mortal nature itself. Of course, God's own wonderful being is absolute, complete and self-contained. Yet, He does descend into our needs through the variegated pathways of time and space. And, all the same, the Absolute cannot possibly be limited by time and space. The larger, being what it is, can be also the smaller; the all-inclusive can as well be individualised; the all-permeating can be the personally touching, too. Unto God limits are no limits but landmarks. With all the foresight of Providence, God is thus the revolving Mercy, the recurrent Grace. Only, rightly viewed, the reckoning of time in terms of various divisions and different opportunities is the divinely-appointed method to lead us out of time into eternity. Just as the father who can walk fast nevertheless totters with the child, just as the mother allows the fulness of the nectar of milk to flow so as to adjust the supply to the need of the child, just as the teacher in the amplitude of his wisdom is as much at home in the Infant Class as in the B. A. Class, even so it is with the Creator in all His dealings with the created. Every year, therefore, is a new year in so far as it opens out a new avenue to the realisation of Eternal Providence.

In God's world there is never anything like waste; for His method is the same. It is like a stream, here narrow and there broad; but, whether narrow or broad, the flow remains perennial under all conditions. Consequently, the new year is new because the Eternal God is ever new. Take the sky, bespangled as it is with

orbs after orbs of splendour; the star-gazer finds there a new beauty, a new charm, a new inspiration, every moment. Take the sea, endlessly surging up wave after wave; if only you have the camera to photograph its changing countenance, it will bring home to you how the surface of the sea alters every moment. And so every new minute goes on making its own contribution to the sum-total of life's meaning even by shaping and moulding the past afresh. The power of thought takes up the material of the days left behind; and wisdom interweaves them all into the soul as revitalising influences. Not a minute is wasted, not a particle is rejected. It is ever new, while being ever the same. Scan the firmament on high; you will find every star new. What, properly, is the mysterious, miraculous relationship that subsists between the eye and the star? It is the sacred, sanctified affinity of spirit with spirit. The new year is new but still not different from, not cut off from, the old. It is the old year coming over again in a new garb. The grace of God as seen in the whole year—it is that that constitutes the new year. We do well to think of God as the revolving God, each season bringing in its own mercies. The year means the circle of God's providence. God performs a *pradakshinam* around the soul. The soul then understands what is meant by seeing God — by God-vision realised in the wealth of spring, in the luxuriance of summer, in the mellowness of autumn, in the serenity of winter.

Thus, as God comes round, He comes to find His temple in the mind. How can this temple be His, if it does

not partake of His nature? Let us invite God to come into our very souls as the all-perfect God, the all-holy God. Thus we shall glorify Him with all the strength which He communicates to us. And then, we shall adore Him, the *Manusamandira*, as the all-perfect God enshrined in the human soul.

Om ! Thathsath !

SERVICES
AND
SERMONS

I
SERVICE*
WITH SERMON ON
RELIGION AND SOCIETY
(1933)

UDBODHANA

Hymn—*Randu mana hridpeethamuna Brahmandanadhundu* (Telugu)

Om ! Brahmandanadhaya namah ! Unto Him, the *Brahmandanadha*, the Lord of the illimitable, all-inclusive universe ; unto Him whom other hearts akin to ours have, in other tongues not known to us, proclaimed as *Rabbul Alameen*, the Lord of all the worlds ; unto Him we render our humble, reverent, adoring obeisances on this thrice-happy occasion of worship. He, the Lord of this boundless creation ; the supreme, sovereign Ruler of all these myriad orbs—He, in His grace abounding, in His mercy measureless, vouchsafes unto us—even unto us, humble, lowly worms crawling in the dust—this incalculably precious privilege of addressing Him, of taking His name, of intently and intimately communing with Him. This is a paramount blessing unto us—even the hallowed privilege of worshipping Him individually and unitedly. Here we are in

*At the Southern India Brahma Samaj Mandir, Madras (16-4-'33).

this sacred temple—sacred with the sanctity of His holy presence and hallowed with memories of generations that have gone before and fragrant with the perfume of the hopes and joys of coming generations that will be seated where we are seated and continue the hosanna-song of praise. Even into this temple He has mercifully brought us together to realise the immeasurable worth of worship. Creatures of time and space uplifted into the children of eternity and transformed into the offspring of immortality by this act of worship—who can tell its value, who can appraise its worth? And yet all this gift and boon comes to us freely, even undeservedly, nay, unexpectedly, unsolicitedly, from the hallowed and sacred hands of our dear God. To call Him dear—how the heart feels itself sanctified and how the soul finds itself exalted even to the highest glory of sonship! Unto that dear God, that near God, that ever-accompanying God, that ever-increasingly benignant God, we are here to tender our devoutest obeisances of love and praise, of thanksgiving and glorification. Oh the unspeakable blessing of it, if only it should be vouchsafed unto us to speak to Him with a throbbing heart and with a jubilant soul! Yet, He is for ever alert, for ever vigilant enough to grant us this blessing. We have only to turn our hearts and souls to Him and say, ‘Do Thou receive us into the shrine of Thy holy presence’. So let us feel it, let us say it, let us strive for it, depending upon Him to vouchsafe this blessing unto us; and we shall surely be blessed and sanctified. Turn we then with expectant hearts and waiting

~~and~~ to adore Him with all the strength and joy of our being.

ARADHANA

Om ! Sathyam Jnanamanantham Brahma Anandaroopamamritham Yadvibhathi Santham Sivamadwaitham Suddhamapapa viddham.

Oh Thou *Parabrahman*, the Infinite One! Thou art *Sathyam*, the eternal Verity, the all-transcending yet all-pervading Reality, the Truth of all truths, the Guarantee of all certitude, the Triumph of all that *is* as distinguished from all that *appears*. Thou art the God of Truth — the Truth that inweaves itself into the whole fabric of this universe; the Truth the perennial pervasion of which makes atom cling to atom and orb whirl round orb; the Truth which gives to the utterance of the tongue the profound sublimity of Divine significance and to the yearning of the heart the imperishable value of Divine inspiration; the Truth which through every pore and fibre of the body manifests itself as the life-giving, love-imparting and sanctity-generating power of our being. Thee as the God of Truth we praise and glorify.

As supreme Truth must necessarily be all-inclusive, all-embracing Wisdom, Thy Truth is no abstraction but Wisdom, *Jnanam* itself, in expression and manifestation. Thou art the God of Wisdom — the Wisdom that for ever dwells as eternal intent and purpose, all-penetrating insight and all-encompassing

foresight; the Wisdom unto which we give in the humble accents of our poor, fragile thought innumerable names such as gospel, inspiration, the guiding lamp unto our feet, that which goes before us as the pillar of cloud by day and leads us as the pillar of fire by night; the Wisdom that blazes forth through myriads of stars above and smiles through numberless flowers here below ; nay, above all, dearer than all, the Wisdom that gives unto the seer his vision, unto the prophet his daring and inspiring voice, unto the poet his chant of praise, unto the mother her probing knowledge of the dear one's innermost being, unto the spouse the attachment from which nothing can be excluded, and unto society its cementing power in measureless expansion and extension. Unto Thee as the God of Wisdom we render our humble and reverent obeisances.

Truth and Wisdom — how these should fail of the longing of our hearts and frustrate all our endeavours, if Thou wert not Infinite, *Anantham*, as the Truth in which we voyage forth for ever and the Wisdom in which we hold our eternal pilgrimage — that Truth which will outsoar the loftiest reaches of human investigation and that Wisdom which will shine forth in unclouded brightness beyond the brightness of the brightest achievements of human genius ! Thou wouldst not be *Brakman* but that Thou art the Infinite — infinite in Truth, infinite in Wisdom, infinite in Thy very being with no bounds of time, of space and of circumstance. Thought-baffling but heart-enchanting, outsoaring the imagination but penetrating into the recesses

of the soul, Thou art the grandest above all that is grand and the minutest within all that is minute, the Eternal One of all ages, the all-inclusive yet all-out-reaching One past all limits. Unto Thee we render our humble obeisances as the God of Infinitude and Eternity.

Yet, oh Thou the beloved One, the all-merciful One, where would be the possibility of this conjoint worship even for this fragile creature, this frail sinner, this seasoned reprobate, if, with love incalculable and out of the boundless, impelling, surging, creative urge of that love, Thou didst not bring us into being at all? That is the miracle of Thy mercy, the marvel of marvels. The world calls it a mystery and pronounces it unfathomable; but of a truth, it is Thy very *anandam* out of which the universe has sprung into being, out of which Thou hast not merely flung the universe into being but entered into its very being. Thou, *Ananda-roopam*, we render our devoutest thanks unto Thee. The world with all its wealth of love and beauty, the soul with all its mine of hope and aspiration — what are they but the living witnesses of Thy *anandam*, the delight, the jubilation of Thy motherly love for all? It is this that emboldens us, impels us, to address Thee as 'Mother'. As the God of Truth, Thou art sublime. As the God of Wisdom, Thou art profound. As the God of Infinitude, Thou art outreaching. But as the God of Bliss, Thou art so near and so dear. Benignant Mother, how Thou contractest Thyself from Thy infinitude into the narrow nook of this sinner's heart, enabling him to call Thee 'Mother'!

And as he knows Thee to be the Mother, embraces Thee as the Mother, leans upon Thee as the Mother and casts himself into Thy arms as the Mother, even the viper becomes the immortal offspring of the Eternal God, *Amritham*. Brought into being by Thy own *anandam*, why need one argue, as if it were an extraneous idea, that one shall be immortal? The child of Love must be eternal; for Love can never be extinguished. Aye, this whole universe is Thy offspring ordained by Thee to be immortal. Oh Thou, God of Immortality, how Thy love manifests itself in incomprehensible ways! Immortal Thyself, how Thou designest all to be immortal! Where Thou hast brought into being, Thou alone evolvest and unfoldest the richest possibilities of being through limitless expansion. Thee as the God of *Anandam* and *Amritham* we glorify with adoring hearts.

The world may pronounce nought but jarring words; and the so-called natural powers may seem to tear at each other. Yet Thou art the God of Peace, *Santham*, because Thou art the God of Goodness, *Sivam*. God of all peace, of all harmony, how Thou burnest all discord beyond trace into so much of dust and ashes! Into the veritable charnel-house there comes the peace of Thy all-forgiving, all-purifying, all-transforming blessing. The field of war becomes the harvest-plot of hope. The throb of the heart is lulled into the peace of trust. The quake of the soul in the anguish of remorse is soothed into the faith which says, 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him ; for He

is the good God.' And Thou Thyself art the serene peace on the mountain-top of holy communion, pronouncing Thy reassuring benediction while the storm rages below. God of *Santhi*, God of *Sivam*, while all around is in confusion and conflict, Thou goest into the heart of the chaos and the contest and pointest there to the truth, the imperishable fact, of eternal harmony. Thou turnest into one symphony the discordant notes of a thousand strifes.

As Thou art the God of *Sivam*, Thou art also the God of that *Adwaitam* which consists, not in feelingless and motionless, throbless and petrified unity, but in the feelingful and throbbing union of all souls that rejoice in the one God of all grace. Thee we devoutly glorify as the God of *Santham*, *Sivam*, *Adwaitam*—of the eternal communion and the imperishable union of all souls.

Inweaving us into one another, fusing us into one divinely-illuminated humanity, Thou pronouncest upon us the benediction of *Suddham*. Upon Thy being can be cast no stain. Thy throne nothing impure can approach. Thou art the holy, the immaculate One in all hearts.

Thus, Mother Thou art; Teacher Thou art; Guide Thou art; Sanctifier Thou art; Immortaliser Thou art; Unifier Thou art. Unto Thee we render our devoutest adoration in love and self-surrender, nay, in jubilant self-dedication. Do Thou take us, receive us,

make us Thy own, and be with us now and for ever.
Blessed be Thy name !

DHYANAMU

Thou beloved One ! Thou movest the tongue and Thou impellest the heart to sing Thy praise and proclaim Thy glory. But the soul seeks something deeper and sublimer, by far nearer and more intimate. Wilt Thou not come into the inner shrine and shekinah, unseal the scales, rend the veil and dispel the mist, that each one of us in the sanctity of united worship may enjoy the bliss of divine communion with Thee ?

*Asathomasadgamaya; thamasomajyothirgamaya; mri-
thyormamrithamgamaya ; aaviraveermayedhirudra yath-
they dakshinam mukham thena mampahi nithyam.*

ANUTHAPAMU

Again and again, we beseech Thee to lead us out of untruth into truth, out of darkness into light, out of death into immortal life. Reveal Thyself unto us. Stretch forth Thy protecting arm around us, and keep us for ever safe. If only we truly yearned for Thy truth and sought to realise Thy immortality, should we be the vile creatures that we are — reprobates in whom the heart belies the tongue and the soul is never in accord with the sense ? Every sense defiled, every thought pretentious, every sentiment hollow, every word deceitful, every act mercenary, the whole life one round of dupe and cheat alternately, how dare we

stand before Thee and say, 'Take us and have us'? What is there that it will accord with Thy sanctity and grace to have from us? The heart tainted, the soul sinful—not merely transgressing but impious and blasphemous, oh dear One, we ourselves do not know the fathomless depths of our iniquity. Thou alone canst sound the abysmal sinfulness in me. I turn to Thee with the feeling of torture at the very mention of the fact that I have been such a reprobate. I turn to Thee, from no merit of mine, but through Thy grace, to cleanse and draw me out of the quagmire, out of the whirlpool, of unrighteousness. Death were preferable to this inextinguishable fire of iniquitous, ungodly being. All-forgiving, all-compassionate One, *anyadha-saranam nasthi, thameva saranam mama*: no other refuge; Thou alone my refuge. Therefore, out of Thy grace and clemency, do Thou shield and protect us all, these my sisters and brothers, from all temptation and all rebelliousness against Thee. Unify us all as Thy children. And make our whole being a fragrant *harathi* of praise and glory unto Thee. Blessed be Thy name now and for ever!

UPADESAMU

As we address ourselves for a few minutes to some edifying, illumining thought of Thee, do Thou descend into our souls and reveal Thyself unto us. What has this sinner to say of Thy sanctity, this purblind creature to state of Thy light? Even through the darkest gloom enters the gleam of Thy grace; and unto it now

we turn with adoring expectation. Bless us, bless us.
Om Thath Sath !

Sisters and Brothers and Fellow-worshippers of
 God,

Will you with fraternal sympathy receive more than I can give of any gleam of light and truth from God, as I humbly endeavour to speak a word of the glory, the power and the inspiration of Religion? I dare say every one of you has heard the name of Thomas Carlyle; not a few have heard of his great work, *Sartor Resartus*; and some have even read that inspired volume. To a sublime thought out of that inspiring work I wish to draw your attention this evening.

Firstly, Carlyle speaks with profound solemnity of what he calls the wonder of wonders — Society — and proceeds to point out how it is only among human beings that there can be Society, and that too, among human beings inspired by Religion. As he puts it, it is only when souls turn heavenward that there can be Society. Souls turning earthward may have their so-called bonds together devoid of a divine purpose. But true Human Society comes into being only when souls turn together heavenward. Then only there is that union which comes of love — not profit-and-loss calculation, not mutual succour, not reciprocal amenity. We are only turning earthward when thus related. It is only when we turn heavenward that we form a Society. For other purposes, we are banded together as Associations, Clubs *et cetera*. In all these,

man is only gregarious and brings out a flock, not a family. The latter is possible only when Religion is an operative power. United in Religion, bound heavenward with a sacred purpose, meeting together in spiritual fellowship, we form Society. It is easy to give the name of Society to any institution. There may be a Society of money-grabbers, of bandits. But the inmost *me* reaches out unto the inmost *thee* only when Religion is the formative and unitive force. Man is no mere tool-using, fire-making or even research-conducting animal but a pilgrim of eternity emerging out of eternity and again going into eternity. And it is this religious pilgrimage that really makes Human Society. Then the need of every man becomes the need of all mankind. And then all are comprised in that Society, because we learn to view every man as a very shrine and shekinah of God. Emerson puts it in another form when he says that Jove nods to Jove from behind each one of us. Thus, such a society alone, rock-bottomed on Religion, constitutes Human Society. Man is a being that looks both before and behind. Accordingly, Human Society is an organism not limited to the present day ; for it looks before and behind. In it therefore, various generations and successive centuries are all unified. He was a social being at eighty who, when asked why he was planting little plants the fruit of which he had no chance of enjoying in his own life, answered, ' Why, as they that went before me planted for me, I plant for those that are to come after me.' Thus the unification of the interests of generations constitutes Human Society. In Bernard Shaw's novel,

The Adventures of the Black Girl in her Search for God, the heroine repairs to Voltaire, the man 'with the most knowing face I have ever seen'; and he says, 'I have found after a good deal of consideration that the best place to seek God in is a garden. Make a little garden for yourself: dig and plant and weed and prune; and be content if he (God) jogs your elbow when you are gardening unskilfully, and blesses you when you are gardening well.' Now, this has to be understood in the spiritual sense: Come and plant the Eden of the soul. That is Religion introduced into Life. For, digging up and planting is possible only for human beings cemented together by forces urged on by Religion—not this creed or that but that which thinks of the body as the Temple of God. Then comes Society out of which grow all the chants which we call hymns. Then the human tongue which only clattered aimlessly before becomes now the very oracle of revelation when Society is formed through the uplifting power of Religion. Every thing else is but a flitting, ephemeral combination of people like the mere heap of shifting sands on the sea-shore. Society is there where people inweave themselves into the spirit of one another. And this is not of this century or that; it began when two or three met to worship and will go on developing until all have joined. Society, then, is the expression of practical Religion. As a Monotheistic Church, the Brahma Samaj is a Society of God based on Religion, the unifying power of which is Religion. All other interests centre round this one interest, namely, religious communion. Soul communing with soul is a marvel

transcending all other mysteries. When two rivers flow into each other, it becomes a sacred place as a *sangam*. Then, when souls flow into one another, how much more sanctified that union must be! Human Society is real Society only when souls flow into one another. 'Islam' — peace in the name of God — what is it but saying that Human Society is based on union in the peace of God? It can assume a thousand forms. But, fundamentally, the union of soul with soul, permeated by Religion and indwelt and illumined by God — this is the only society to which we give the name of 'society'. People come and go away; there is no such thing as a permanent, inalienable interest! But let them form one society in the union of human souls in spiritual love; and that makes it imperishable; and the human race, human kind, is possible only when formed into this society. Politics is only the outer skin. And our various guilds of crafts, combinations for industry and profit-making are the muscular and osseous tissues. The real pericardial tissue which sustains the energy of nervine, vigorous life is Religion. It is Religion that is the heart at the centre and the moving nervous activity all over the body politic. Let it be sound; and then, the muscular, osseous and all other tissues will be sound. Let the heart be disturbed, let the circulation be arrested; and then, the skin is parched and muscle and bone droop and wither.

Secondly, Carlyle observes, if you would be a member of this Human Society, you must needs realise that every one is a priest — a receiver of holy inspiration

and also a communicator of a holy message. Then and only then you have a Human Society ; otherwise only a flock of sheep, a herd of cattle. It is Human Society when we are priests of the Holy One receiving and sending forth His holy emanation.

Thirdly, if we are to form this Society of Human Beings, we shall not confine it to one place. It goes on increasing itself, taking in the whole past, harvesting the present and sowing the seed for the future. As the poet has said, it is not the past, it is not the future, it is the one sacred Now. We have all the heritage of the past, all the wealth of the present, and all the responsibility and obligation of the future, drawn into the heart of each one as he becomes a member of Human Society.

Fourthly, as we gather all in, we must, if this Society is to continue in perpetual life, recognise the supreme necessity for the indwelling religious spirit of it to be evenly maintained. Else, it must prove a futile effort to sustain the body when the heart has stopped. If you would maintain the spiritual vitality of Society, let us, as I have already said, think of each one of us as a priest to whom the Holy Spirit directly speaks and out of whom He rays forth on all sides. Everything else is but a shifting sand-shore with nought of permanence at all.

Let us, then, catch these few points. We may, according to customary language, give the name of

Society to any combination of men. But it cannot be true and lasting Human Society unless we inweave it with Religion as the one unifying and sustaining element. And why? Because then only is the centre of attraction shifted from all other interests to the innermost *me* and the innermost *thee* converging into one focus. Such is the function of Religion and such its triumph. And upon us in the Brahma Samaj is placed the responsibility of creating such a spiritual society of mankind. Rajah Rammohun Roy visioned it all when he proclaimed that Divine Worship is not only possible for all but incumbent upon all. There is no such thing as the presiding priest and the humbly following flock, the privileged and the unprivileged. What is a temple but only the epitomised, summarised form of union unto which all are welcome — only the focus-point illustrating our basic precept, '*Suvishamdamviswam pavithram Brahmamandiram*'? In the Brahma Samaj, this Society of friends in the Spirit, there is, of a truth, only one family of which God alone is the creating and cherishing, the sustaining and ever-unfolding Parent. It is this Society that we are privileged to be members of. May He reveal unto us the rich possibilities and the ample, abundant grace implied in this human society created, sustained and glorified in Religion!

DHANYAVADASAMARPANAM and PRARDHANA

Our own beloved God ! To call Thee God is the language of the creature. To name Thee beloved God

is the privilege of the child. Unto Thee as the beloved God—as the perpetual Propagator, Sustainer, and Augmenter, and the eternal Fulfiller of human kind—we render our whole-hearted thanks. How blessed it is to know and to feel that over the remotest past and the farthest future Thou hast spread one vinculum that all might be drawn together into one Society! As we thank Thee for this revelation, oh the anguish of the heart to feel how unworthy, how faithless we have been and are! We beseech Thee, put into us the genuine spirit of Human Society—the Confraternity in which each shall rejoice in rendering and surrendering himself or herself unto the good of all and in subserving the advancement and happiness of all. Grant that we live lives worthy of this Fraternity. Let Thy blessing descend upon us. Guide us, watch our days, lead our steps, strengthen our hearts, and illumine our souls to live lives of God-inspired and God-fostered Human Society. Blessed be Thy name now and for ever!

Om ! Brahma Kripahi Kevalam !
Om ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Santhih !
Om ! Harih Om !

II
UTSAV SERVICE*
(1933)

UDBODHANA

Unto Him the Supreme *Parabrahman*, who compriseth in Himself all that is sacred and true, we humbly and gratefully tender our most reverent salutations on this blessed occasion. We are here to praise Him and glorify Him. However exalted in His own being, He is with us so intimate, unto us so tender and towards us so affectionate. It is sheer sterility of thought ever to imagine Him as distant from us. This God is unto us so true, so beloved, so precious that silent gratitude, unspoken faithfulness, unuttered adoration is the best manifestation of our reverence for Him. How we are irresistibly drawn into a horizon of grey dawn where the heart's joy is the soul's adoration! We love Him as He manifests Himself unto us. We praise Him as the One that is enduring through all time, dispensing grace, disclosing truth and discriminating the righteous from the unrighteous. Joy immense, bliss unbounded—that is what we experience at the very thought of the Divine manifestation through the whole spirit of the universe. He is so compelling in regard to our adoration that we not only do not stray out but are

*During the Brahmotsav celebrations at the Southern India Brahma Samaj Mandir, Madras (23-1-'33).

securely forbidden from wandering out as we seek to realise Him. As the great saint, Dada, has said, God has created man with his soul to be a temple unto Himself. It is this temple-idea that has thriven through ages, creating in every soul a perpetual hankering not mereiy to spread forth His message of love into every home and every community but to reach the fulness of His own sanctity and His own glory in the innermost recesses of its own being. He is the very Soul of our souls — the Guardian of our existence and the Guarantee of our salvation. Blessed be His name that He thus reveals Himself unto us as the indwelling God, the soul-enshrined God of all ! The hour of worship is surpassingly sacred, as it is immeasurably delighting, to every soul that participates in it. May He vouchsafe unto us the blessing of an intimate and vivid realisation of Himself as the all-perfect God !

ARADHANA

Oh Thou Supreme One ! Thou surpasses all designation and even all thought, as Thou art far beyond any picturing in word or in imagination. Yet Thou art so closely manifest unto us in Thy spirit. We feel assured that Thou art the one Truth, the one *Sathyam*, that endures through all times, that spreads forth through all circumstances, that exists behind all existences, that indwells the whole order of things, that inspires all that is worthy and noble, that pierces into the vaccum of human ignorance to make it the shrine of Divine self-expression, that manifests itself

in the kindest forms — be it love, be it attachment, be it attraction — as the One manifolded through all human conceptions and all human efforts striving after perfection along the whole march of creation since the beginning of time. Oh the glorifying vision! Thou art thus the Truth imperishable, inexhaustible, invincible; the Truth ever triumphant; the Truth that reigns by eternal right as the Sovereign of all creation. Thou art the God of the Truth in which wisdom and knowledge stand supreme, which probes down to the depths of the ocean, which goes forth into the horizon and far beyond—nay, the whole order of things. We, the sinners, humbly bow down before Thee, Thou God of Wisdom, who seest potentialities in the humblest and the lowliest. We trust in Thee; we confide in Thee; we crave Thy guidance; and we unitedly and individually worship Thee as the God of all Wisdom. Thou art the God of all—the Infinite Love that holds us together and embraces us fully, safe and secure, ever-growing and ever-advancing. Thou reachest in Thy love all the recesses of the whole universe, making it one home of joy and rendering unto it the salvation of peace and progress. Thou manifestest unto us in the abundance of Thy love the innumerable phases of ever-progressive life. Dear, dear One, words cannot spell the profound gratitude of our hearts as we think of Thee as the all-loving, all-gracious, all-forgiving, all-conciliating and all-redeeming God. Every home is resonant with Thy love; every family is jubilant over Thy attentions; and every nation thrills with the joy of Thy ordainings. Thus, again and again Thou dost

vouchsafe unto us the inexpressible joy that Thou wouldst have every one feel to the full in life. Thou art at the helm. Do Thou lead us out of untruth into truth, out of darkness into light, out of death into life immortal. As Thou art the Self-revealing One, reveal Thyself unto us and inspire us with all reverence for Thee and Thy name. Thou art the whole Treasure of our souls, the sole Possessor of our beings. With reverent hearts, we pray Thee on this solemn occasion to draw us closer unto Thee and enable us to realise, through the illumination of life, that the destinies of man are in the hands of God.

These, my sisters and brothers, are eager to hear the message of Thy Divine mercy and grace. I the sinful, I the faithless, I the prodigal—I to bear witness to Thy truth ! Grant their eager desire and satisfy them to some little extent as it pleaseth Thee. *Om ! That sath !*

iii
FAMILY SERVICE *
(1915)

UDBODHANA

Our humble salutations unto the all-holy, ever-adorable God! In His infinite mercy, He has kept us safe in the loving arms of His protection since last we rendered Him our worship here together. In His loving-kindness, He has once again vouchsafed unto us this blessed occasion, calling us together as children gather round to offer their love and gratitude to their common parent, friend and protector. This, truly, is a most blessed hour for the humble and aspiring soul. For this unspeakable boon we render our profoundest thanks unto Him. He never forgets us, though we run far astray from His ways. He never loses sight of us, whereas we constantly fall into thoughtless error and criminal guilt. Reaching forth His loving arms to reclaim us ever to His bosom, He renews the call of His tender voice unto us. Such is His merciful dispensation for His children that He ever keeps Himself in loving touch with all their concerns. He is the only true Friend, the ever-wakeful Providence, the never-failing Helper, the eternally reliable Companion. Let us seek, by this blessing of worship, once again to be established in our faith and trust in Him, to be once again made

* In Pithapuram Palace (24-7-'15).

fresh in our love and devotion towards Him, to be once again sanctified with self-consecration for His service. Here we are in this holy place to glorify and to sing the praise of our all-merciful God. May He so absorb the deepest longings of our hearts and the purest aspirations of our souls as to make us His humble yet acceptable servants in this home of ours ! Blessed be His name !

ARADHANA and DHANYAVADASAMARPANAM

Thou art the Supreme One. Thou art the Only True God. Thou art the all-knowing, all-seeing Master and Judge. Thou art the all-loving Parent. Thou art the all-harmonising Peace. Thou art the all-sanctifying Holiness. Thou art the all-unifying, absolute One. Thou art our All-in-all. Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thou !

We depend on Thee as our Salvation. We lean on Thee as our Support. We completely trust in Thee as our Friend. We implicitly follow Thee as our Guide. We rejoicingly obey Thee as our Master. We devoutly pray unto Thee as our God. We intently seek communion with Thee as our Inspirer. We lovingly cherish Thee as our Co-dweller. We restfully abide in Thee as our sweet Home, our blessed Heaven. Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thy name !

Creating in us an insatiable longing for purity and search for wisdom, sustaining us with interminable light, cherishing us with boundless love, serving us with

infinite solicitude and ever fostering and nourishing us with ceaseless providence, Thou art so merciful, so parent-like, so friend-like—nay, so like Thy own self, 'One only without a second'. We know how immense—beyond not only our merits but even our anticipating expectations—has been Thy mercy, Thy loving-kindness, unto us. Yet we know not how we may tender our sincerest thanks unto Thee save with grateful hearts and hopeful souls. Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thou and Thy name!

All time taken up with one process, all space filled with one presence, all light advancing along one path, all beings bound up together by one outlook, we live in communion with Thy spirit of providential benevolence ineffably gracious both within and without. Thou alone art the Source and Seat of our lives. Our joys spring all from Thee. Our energies flow all toward Thee. Our sorrows are relieved only by Thy sympathy. Our strength derives wholly from Thee. Our happiness depends entirely upon Thy gifts. And our true beings realise themselves in Thee and Thee alone.

Lord God, for what feeds the body, for what improves the mind, for what purifies the heart, for what refines the conscience and strengthens the will, for what ennobles the soul and extends the vision, for all that makes the past so suggestive and the future so hopeful, blessing our lowly, limited selves with throbs of the sublime and the sacred and ordaining the whole of our existence with wisdom—for these and more of

Thine untold bounties, for everything connected with certainty in all our designs lifted up to high and lofty purposes, we tender our devoutest thanks unto Thee. The seasons laden with mercies come round in their un-failing order to reveal Thy ceaseless kindness unto us ; and the revolutions of nature at all times bring unto us the mystic messages and unfold before us the impe-rishable purposes of Thy creation. So we are impelled and enabled to feel how life is wholly in Thy keeping ; how, as we step forth at every turn, Thou art close by as our care-taking Companion ; how, as we face the smallest risks, Thou art our unerring Guide ; how, as we falter, Thou art our cheering Hope ; how, in the strength of love, 'Thou art our loving Friend and pro-protecting Parent ; and how, unto each one of us, Thou art ever the indescribable, inconceivable Mother of tender mercies. Hallowed be Thy name !

Our salvation Thy supreme concern, our joy Thy real solicitude, our health and happiness Thy incessant care, Thou art so intimately interwoven with our vari-ed and ever-shifting fortunes. All the myriad blessings of our lives flow only from Thy fore-ordaining love, most mercifully provided as they severally are in ad-vance of our wildest dreams. Oh, Thou art the Merciful One — aye, Thou art Mercy itself. Glory be unto Thy being !

Thou art the Life of our lives. 'Thou refreshest us by day and by night. Our sustenance comes from Thee ; and all our delights are rained down by Thee.

Thou art our Feeder in need, our Preserver and Protector under all conditions. We find every comfort in Thy companionship. Thou sendest hope and consolation into the hell of sorrow and misery. When we are lost in sin and wickedness, how Thou dost visit us as our most secret Inspirer and our most potent Regenerator ! Thy mercies, O Lord, who can fathom ? Blessed be Thou and Thy mercies !

PRARDHANA

Besetting, inbreathing God ! Teach us to realise Thy sacred presence, as Thou goest before us in all our paths and dwellest in the inmost recesses of our hearts. Grant that we may face or, at the least, glimpse Thee everywhere and feel the touch of Thy loving arms ever around us. Quicken us to consecrate our souls to Thy all-permeating spirit that thus we may thrill with the sense of Thy holiness putting down each lowly desire, suppressing each worldly craving and sanctifying all the sentiments of our being by the touch of Thy holy feet. Sweeten our whole lives and draw us, one and all, into closer communion with Thee, the Everlasting, the Ancient One of days. Keep us, we beseech Thee, always under the overarching shadow of Thy protection. Be Thou the Light of our joy amidst all encircling darkness. Be Thou our Shield and Armour against all seducing temptations and secularising harassments. Grant that our eyes may turn nowhere but to the visions of Thy mercy. Enable us to realise that not a moment passes but reveals Thy amazing goodness and calls for our highest praise and deepest gratitude.

Thou art the Father of this family. Thou art the Guardian of the lives of all who constitute this household. It is our rarest privilege so to call Thee our Father and our Guardian and to bow before Thee, trusting in Thee and Thine infinite mercy. The sole Ruler of this universe, the supreme Lord of earth and heaven, Thou yet makest Thyself the tutelary Deity of every home, the purveying Protector of every family, the beloved Companion of every inmate.

We implore Thy blessing upon all the manifold relations, the multifarious affections and the myriad tender ties of our family circle. Do Thou render them constant and strengthen and sanctify them with Thy grace. Foster in us, we crave of Thee, right feelings towards one another; and cast out selfishness, suspicion, jealousy and whatever may tend to create ill-will, discord or disharmony amid the domestic joys of this hearth and home. In every passage of domestic trials, vouchsafe that trust in Thee, nourished by knowledge of Thy ceaseless goodness and by confidence in Thy unfailing wisdom, may save all hearts from the blankness of despair and the barrenness of cynicism. Thou who, with more than a mother's affection, dost feed and foster every member of this family, do Thou cherish likewise the souls of these, Thy children, and, in Thy holy keeping, prosper them in faith and trust, hope and joy. Chasten out all our wrong-doings; and draw us nearer unto Thee with our promise fulfilled in wholeness. Help us ever to keep our spirits against the assaults of mortality; and maintain the purity of Thy

influence in all the transactions of daily life. Send into our hearts the benediction of true harmony and humanity that, through the vicissitudes of life, we may learn to bear and forbear and remain unshaken amid the turmoils of earthly existence. As Thou art the God of this family, we beseech Thee, make it the haunt of divine life, the home of spotless purity, the abode of unflinching faith, the asylum of undisturbed peace and the harbour of unclouded goodwill. As Thou art, likewise, the Father of all families on earth, do Thou extend Thy blessings everywhere and impart Thy wisdom unto all Thy loving children. Thus drawn to Thee, may the heart of every sister and brother be consecrated unto Thy glory ; and may Thy majesty stand for ever supreme ! Blessed be Thy name !

Lord of lords, do Thou engage our whole lives in Thy service ; and grant us the blessedness of communion with Thee in the passing hours of life — in the exulting hour of gladness, in the depressing hour of weakness, in the absorbing hour of toil, in the light-some hour of recreation — alike in all domestic relations and social intercourses. Guard us against the degrading worship of any created object and against every species of that spiritual disloyalty which draws all life's energies away from Thee. Promote Thou in us the beatitude of a face-to-face vision of Thee ; and remove from within us that idolatry which bows the self to the rivalries of ambition and the rancours of revenge and to the forbidden felicities of this world. Oh, lead us unto Thee alone as our only Master, our one

true God. May we always realise that the sole aim of life is to find Thee; and, thus, may our thoughts, words and deeds prove ever true to Thy ideal ! May our whole life be filled with Thy holy spirit ! Do Thou establish our affections firmly in Thee that we may ever hanker after nought but Thee and thoroughly devote ourselves to none but Thee in cheerful resignation unto Thy blessed will. Subdue the unholy passions of our nature ; and teach us to pray and to strive for the fulfilment of Thy purposes as the sole mission of our being ; so that, dedicated humbly to Thy service, we may advance with no faltering step in the path of the holy that Thou hast ordained for us — even for us. Impel us willingly to surrender our worldly interests unto Thee ; and vouchsafe to us the enthusiasm intently to subserve Thy will and labour for the establishment of Thy Kingdom.

ASEESH

The Lord of all truth guide us ! The Lord of all mercy cherish us ! The Lord of all righteousness sanctify us ! The Lord of all glory for ever reign supreme over all realms and hearts ! Blessed, blessed, blessed be our beloved God ; and blessed be His children and His creatures ! Be the whole universe ever filled with the blessings of His grace !

Om ! Brahma Kripahi Kevalam !

Om ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Santhih !

Om ! Harih Om !

IV

SERVICE : THE GOD OF DISPENSATIONS (1930)

UDBODHANA

Om ! Parabrahmane namah ! Thanks and salutations unto the supreme Lord of life, who is the Lord of our lives, the very breath of our being, the light and sustenance of the mind, the joy and strength of the heart, the vividness and vigour of the conscience, the sanctity and beatitude of the soul ! Innumerable are the mercies He ceaselessly showers upon us. For the upkeep of the body, for the enlightenment of the mind and, far more than aught else, for the sanctification of the spirit in us — for all His myriad blessings, we render our obeisant offerings of grateful thanks unto Him. As He draws us to His own bosom time and again, nay, every hour and every moment, His worship becomes the soul's response and returning pilgrimage on our side. Every pore of the body, every throb of the heart, every vivifying aspiration of the soul, establishes a living channel of intercommunication between our own selves and the higher, deeper Self of our selves. To worship Him is truly to return to the bosom of the Divine Parent. Feeding, nourishing, cherishing, cleansing, purifying, delighting and perfecting like the earthly

mother, our Divine Mother makes life itself a perpetual donation of love from on high unto us. To rejoice in this supreme gift, not alone with the utterance of the lip, but even with the pulsation of the heart—this is the occasion, and this the occupation, that once again gathers us here together around the altar of the Unseen. With all reverence, then, let us bow before the Ever-Adorable, the only Adorable God of truth and wisdom, righteousness and bliss indescribable.

AVAHANA

Thou the immeasurable, the surpassingly supreme One! We approach Thee with all the hankering and hungering of our souls. This bliss of making up to Thee is wholly Thy free gift, entirely the gift of Thy grace, unto us. Remembering our own frailties and follies, we tremble at our very audacity. But the greeting of Thy bewitching smile draws us on and on to Thee with an attraction beyond all resistance. We feel once again the sanctifying breath of Thy holy spirit upon our souls. We would worship, adore and glorify Thee. Do Thou in Thy mercy come into us and so fill us with the exultant joy of Thy companionship that we may be reborn into newness of life.

ARADHANA

Om ! Sathyam Jnanamanantham Brahma Ananda-roopamamritham Yadvibhakti Santham Sivamadwaitam Buddhamapaviddham.

Oh the bliss of dwelling upon Thee, of dwelling in Thee ! Thou, Thou art the unifying force of creation. Thou art the eternal guarantee of creation. Thou art the immortal goal of creation. All that the world can ever disclose is for ever enclosed and comprised in Thee. We rejoice to glorify Thee with truth upon the tongue, with fidelity in the heart and with self-surrender in the soul.

Thou art *Sathyam*, the Truth — the cementing, the perfecting, the eternal, the ever-enduring Sustainance and Support of the universe. Thou art the reassuring reality behind all social relations as within all natural processes — the never-betraying reliability of the friend, the ever-devoted chastity of the spouse, the unfailing justice and equity ingrained in the nation, even as Thou art the perpetual gleam of the stars and the perennial flow of the streams.

And as Thou art the essence of all existence in its eternal fact as *Sathyam*, so Thou art the essence of it all in its eternal expression as *Jnanam*. Howsoever inconceivable, it is only in Thy self-knowledge as *Chith* that my life, every life, is contained. Pervading limitless space and boundless time, Thou art that Wisdom from which all knowledge, all the light of the intuitions of the soul, wells up as out of depthless profundity. Thy *Jnanam* —how it precedes all prophecies and how it has been the antecedent of all oracles from time without beginning !

Thou *Anantham* ! Thou inhabitest infinity itself. Subtler than the subtlest, Thou art alike mightier

than the mightiest. Who can measure the depths of Thy being or calculate the altitudes thereof ? So self-contained Thou art in Thine own perfection.

Yet, even as Thou art *Anandam*, Thy self-sufficiency flows forth into every scene of creation ; for it can realise itself only in and through the grand and glorious, the ever-expanding and ever-multiplying objectification of Thyself. Each one of us, so gloomy and so sad, is, nevertheless, a token of Thy supreme blissfulness in love. How manifold are the forms and expressions of Thy *anandam*—in the lisp of the child, in the embrace of the spouse, in the blessing of the teacher, in the magnanimity of the master, in the trustfulness of the servant, in the concerns of the soul as in the disclosures of science, in the processes of history as in the alternations of night and day and through the round of the seasons! Everywhere, it is Thy *anandam*. What is the radiance of the sun, the fragrance of the flower, the gentleness of the zephyr, but a hint of Thy *anandam*, Thy joy in widest commonalty spread? Out of *anandam* Thou hast called forth this creation even as a ceaseless amplification of Thine own being of bliss. And it all abides in Thy *anandam*, grows in Thy *anandam* and pilgrimages into Thy *anandam*. Thine is self-fulfilling. self-realising *anandam* in the growth of the soul, in the development of the race and in the whole pageant of human progress. With the incoming wisdom of Thy sages and prophets we perceive Thy *anandam*. Fed by *anandam*, sustained by

anandam, gathered into repose by *anandam*, our whole life is one sacrament of *anandam*.

And in Thy *amritam*, Thy everlastingness which Thou dost share with us, we have the bliss of *anandam* perfected. And thus, in death as in birth, we enter upon our inheritance of immortality in Thee.

Then, as Thou multipliest Thyself in *anandam*, so Thou dost unify all the multifarious, countless ways of Thy purpose in the harmony of *santham* in the heart and *sivam* in the soul, even as Thou art *adwaitam*, One only without a second.

And, oh *Suddham*, Thou art the God of all holiness, absolutely flawless, who claimest us—even us, unclean creatures—as Thine own children out of the abundance of Thy grace.

We praise Thee, we glorify Thee, that Thou art the object of our adoration—all through Thy mercy eternally vouchsafed unto us.

DHYANAM

As we have adored our own adorable God even with the joyousness of our souls, He, in His mercy, invites us to a deeper plunge into His being. May He deign to gather us into Himself that we may enjoy His intimate companionship; and may He vouchsafe to us the unspeakable joy of communion with His own spirit

in the sanctuary of silence and alone with the Alone !
How profoundly, how surpassingly sweet is the sweet
companionship of the Lord !

*Asathoma sadgamaya, thamasma jyothirgamaya,
mrithyormamritham gamaya ! Aaviraveermayedhi Rudra
yatthey dakshinam mukham thena mampahi nithyam !*
Lead us, we beseech Thee, out of untruth into truth ;
deliver us out of darkness into light ; emancipate
us out of death-like sinfulness into life immortal. Do
Thou reveal Thyself to each one of us. For ever pro-
tect us and perfect us. Hallowed, hallowed, hallowed
be Thy name ! *Om ! Thath sath !*

DHANYAVADASAMARPANAMU

God of all dispensations ! Thy voice has been ut-
tering Thy imperishable truth through all ages and in
all climes, even as Thou art the God of all ages and
climes. None is left without Thy direct witness. And
once we are led by Thy grace into the harmony of Thy
truth, all prophets become Thy messengers, all sages
Thy standard-bearers and all scriptures the mirrors of
Thy self-revelation. They stand, not divided one
from another, but unified and harmonised in Thee.
Thou art the *Dhatha*, the *Vidhatha* of all destinies.
The trusting, reverent spirit alone knoweth to welcome
as Thy harbingers all that come in Thy holy name.
East united to west, north made neighbour to south,
the past focussed in the present and the present fore-
shadowing the future — for this, Thy sweetest blessing,

we render Thee our grateful thanks. No door is closed to us. No heritage is denied to us. No pilgrimage is forbidden to us. How Thou bringest it home to us that it is not colour or complexion, language or upbringing, that can set up barriers between soul and soul but it is the hospitality of universal truth that Thou meanest to be the eternal goal of all the children of men !

ASEESH

May the God of all truth for ever abide with us as the one Reality beneath and behind the appearances of life ! May the God of all holiness for ever sanctify us with the baptism of His own spirit ! May the God of all dispensations for ever be unto us the guiding Spirit of salvation through the marvellous manifestations of His own grace ! Indwelling in Him, may we for ever realise the bliss of His Kingdom established in our hearts and homes and all over this world ! Blessed, blessed, blessed be He and His name now and for ever !

*Om ! Brahma Kripahi Kevalam !
Om ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Santhih !
Om ! Harih Om !*

V
MAHARSHI DEVENDRANATH
MEMORIAL SERVICE*
(1931)

· UDBODHANA

Om ! Parabrahmane namah ! Unto that Supreme One who is All-in-all and who is unto us our All ; unto that wise, good and holy One who, in His wisdom, mercy and holiness, reveals Himself to us as the all-perfect, all-blissful One—unto Him we render our humble salutations on this truly solemn day. Our hearts are moved with the deepest feelings of gratitude and reverence towards our God. This is the day which, for ever, is kept sacred to the memory of him, a true saint and maharshi of God, whose glorious life set in this world only to rise with greater glory in a purer and holier world beyond. This is, for each one of us in the Brahma Samaj, a day full of inspiring and sanctifying memories. This is the day which, as it comes round year after year, makes manifest to us the truth that God is the Living God working out ever more the salvation of the whole human race. For the noble life of him who reached the perfection of saintliness so far as it is given to man to realise it in this world, we bless our God, as we are met here gratefully and reverently to dwell upon His grace as it was

*At Pithapuram Prardhana Samaj (19-1-'81).

disclosed in the life of Maharshi Devendranath. What a grand, God-inspired, God-filled life it^{*} was! And as we think of that glorious life, how we realise that God has been directly and intimately working in the life, by personally inspiring the soul, of every one of us! How rich the life becomes and how full of meaning and purpose the whole creation is made, when we ponder how we are being shaped and moulded by the wisdom, goodness and righteousness of the Supreme Father and Saviour, humble and obscure though we be! We bless His name for this good news thus given to us. We render Him our devoutest thanks for this that, insignificant creatures as we are, He yet vouchsafes to us even the direct attention of His own personal love. May He so intensely fill us with the sense of His own presence that we may derive from this day the fullest measure of faith strengthened, of hope vivified and of devotion deepened! Blessed be the name of the Lord now and for ever!

ARADHANA

*Om Sathyam Jnanamanantham Brahma Anandaroopamamritham yadvibhathi Santham Sivamadwaitam
Suddhamapapaviddham!*

Oh, Thou Eternal One! How deeply we are moved, how to the very centre of our being there comes the awe of profound submission, as we name Thee *Sathyam*! Oh the virtue, the power, the all-sustaining strength of that thought! Thou art *Sathyam*; Thou art

Reality. All else is but the fitting expression, the moving form, of Thy *Sathyam*. This immense world so surpassingly vast is yet merely a name and a form of which Thou, the Reality, art the Substance for all time. Thou God of *Sathyam*, in how many ways and through how many instances Thou dost make it clear to us that Thou art the Eternal Truth and every atom, every animalcule, in this universe is a product, an embodiment, of that Truth! As we are taught, by those who know, that what we conceive as the atom, and what we call the animalcule are only forms of Thy energy ever-living and ever-active, thrilling and vibrating every minute, we feel how profound is all life in the God of Truth. Without Thee, the whole world were an empty dream, a mere name. This seemingly fixed form, this apparently all-conquering power — Thou alone art the ever-stable Source, the ever-replenishing Spring, of it all. Thou art the enduring Reality. Blessed be Thy name!

What is *Sathyam* except the reality of *Jnanam*? How penetrating is Thy sight, how far-reaching is Thy insight, how comprehensive is Thy outlook and how all-embracing is Thy design! It is simply amazing that Thy wisdom should be so minutely aware of the tiniest and should, at the same time, encircle within itself even the vastest of objects. The complete compass of space, the full measure of time, the whole scope of life, the central plan of creation — all, all are embraced in Thy *Jnanam*. Thou fittest all into one all-unifying purpose. Our innermost thoughts are known

to Thee, however much we struggle to conceal them from Thee. Not only is everything known to Thee but it is all shaped and guided by Thee. We rejoice in Thee as the God of *Jnanam*. Blessed be Thy name!

And this truth and knowledge, this reality and wisdom, of Thine are, after all, the expressions of Thyself as *Anantham*, the Infinite One. Thou art *Anantham*. Let us count back ever so much and let us speculate forward to the uttermost; and yet all that lies behind and before is included in Thee. Subtler than the subtlest and mightier than the mightiest art Thou. Thou art infinite in every quality, infinite in the profound depths of Thy being, infinite in the methods, plans and agencies that Thou dost employ for the upgrowth of Thy creatures. Blessed be Thy name!

Abiding in Thyself as the eternal Truth, as the all-embracing Wisdom, as the all-transcending Infinite, how Thou dost make Thyself plain unto us through Thine own infinity! And, oh, how every star and every flower proclaims Thee as the God of *Anandam*! In Thy creation, there is no place for any unhappiness, any sense of isolation, any feeling of oppression. *Anandam*! Again and again, Thy devotees have declared that this universe is sprung out of *Anandam*, is moved in *Anandam* and is drawn back into *Anandam*. What numberless souls for ever rejoice in *Anandam*! How Thou showerest down the infinite, eternal blessing of Thy *Anandam* everywhere and always! Let the heart stop beating for a single second; Thy *Anandam* will

then be brought home to us. Like the life that floods our whole being, it is so full, so constant, so readily available, that it goes unnoticed and unthanked for by us even because of its fulness, constancy and ready availability. Blessed be Thy name !

Thus living in Thy *Anandam*, we have *Amritham*, the bliss of immortality. Oh, Thou God of Life Eternal, Thou refusest to forsake us under any conditions. It is not like the human parents that leave their children behind and themselves pass away. But Thou abidest for evermore as the Eternal Parent and makest, likewise, Thine own into *amrithasyaputhriah*. Thou valuest and cherishest us as Thy children beyond the bounds of time. And so, death has no terror for us, and time itself fails to conquer us. We are for ever safe, secure and happy in Thy bosom as the God of *Amritham*. It is thus Thou manifestest Thyself — *yadvibhathi*. In this way, Thou workest out Thy free providence, imparting *Anandam* and vouchsafing *Amritham* unto all Thy children. Blessed be Thy name !

Thou art *Santham*, *Sivam*, *Adwaltham* — that Peace, Beneficence and all-embracing Unity in which the whole compass of creation is rendered eternally blessed. And, uniting us all in the harmony of peace and good-will, Thou dost cleanse us of impurity and make us *suddham*, absolutely untainted. As Thou art *Suddham*, the God of righteousness, the purpose of Thy creation must be righteous. And therefore, not alone

for enjoying *Anandam*, for gaining *Santham* or even for being unified and harmonised in Thee, but for the purpose of receiving Thy holiness and adoring Thee as the Holy Spirit, have we been vouchsafed this gift of life. It is dear to us only as the gift of *Suddham*, the God of eternal holiness. Blessed be Thy name!

DHYANAMU

How happy it is to take Thy blessed name upon the lip in a spirit of reverence! How indescribably more blessed it is to enjoy the bliss of holy communion with Thee after praising Thee and glorifying Thee! The body, the family, society, the globe, the universe—all are stale, tasteless, valueless unless they are brightened, sweetened and sanctified by holy communion with Thee. Even a minute of complete, enrapturing enjoyment in communion with Thee is all-in-all unto us. That blessed communion is Thy richest gift unto us. We thank Thee and bless Thee for it.

(Congregational Chant)

For ever, be with us. For ever, protect us. For ever, bless us. Blessed be Thy name!

DHANYAVADASAMARPANAMU

Oh Thou, our own God! We feel proud to call Thee our God, because Thou makest it plain unto us that we are, each one of us, dear to Thee. Even the humblest and the lowliest is yet dear to Thee. What word of poor, mortal tongue can tell how dear Thou

holdest each one of us? Thou enterest into the bosoms of the mother and the father and movest them to love the child. Did our parents bestow any thought upon bringing us into being? Thy went their way; and there they stopped. But not one single soul is allowed by Thee to be lost. Thou so prizest and valuest each one of us that Thou findest us all fit to worship Thee and to rejoice in Thee and abide in Thee for evermore. Through how many thousands of ways and means Thou workest our salvation! Every minute, every second, brings a new miracle of Thy saving grace into our experience. Every beat of the heart announces to us that Thou art the Living God, the Cherishing God, the Sanctifying God, and Thou protectest us and perfectest us for evermore. One favourite and truly powerful way is this, that Thou showest unto us through example after example how it is possible for men sinning like ourselves to be divinely inspired and perfected. Thou dost show through innumerable instances in every age and in every country that Thou dost give proof of Thy wonderful love for us. When we feel that we are weak, erring and sinful, Thou winnest us by the noble witness of virtue and righteousness. When we seem to droop and languish with despair that we cannot know, realise and worship Thee, Thou showest how it is possible beyond doubt to know Thee, to be devoted to Thee and to adore Thee and Thee alone. In every land, in every generation, Thou settest up such witnesses of Thy never-tiring, never-ceasing interest in us and affection for us, always alive and always active, that we may know Thee and love Thee, become Thy

children and be immortal. And we are here today to render thanks for one such outstanding instance vouchsafed to us for our enlightenment, admiration, guidance, imitation and regeneration. For this marvellous testimony to Thy truth, love, righteousness and holiness, we render our especial thanks unto Thee. May we be taught that Maharshi is truly Thy *ri-hi*, that Thou hast designed him in this age to be a proof of Thy love and righteousness and that, through his example, Thy holiness is entering, pouring, into the souls of us all to sanctify us! Blessed be Thy name!

UPADESAMU

Fellow-worshippers of God,

We are here today to celebrate the anniversary of our holy exemplar whom God, in His infinite mercy, has given to us to study, to revere, to receive inspiration from. Think of it, and you see how, in the history of the Brahma Samaj as in that of every dispensation, there have been such witnesses of God's wonderful doings for the regeneration and salvation of human souls. It must be plain to every one who has studied the records of any religious denomination that, first of all, there comes a great seer who, from the high spiritual altitude of perceived verity, proclaims a gospel of truth; and then follow one or more who, as it were, symbolise that gospel in themselves and whose lives are illustrations of that evangel; and these, again, are succeeded duly by those who broadcast the message to the world at large. Thus, to behold the vision, to live the

vision and to make known the vision that all may see it and live it—these mark the distinct stages in the forward march of any religious communion. Accordingly, in Rammohun the Seer, Devendranath the Saint and Keshub the Apostle, the common history of religions has only repeated and re-illustrated itself through a regular succession or *paramparyam*, as we term it in our land.

The life of Maharshi Devendranath Tagore is, to a wonderful degree, the history of the growth of a saint passing regularly through all the well-known stages of the saintly career. God Himself first descended on his life on that solemn occasion when he sat musing while the mortal remains of his old grandmother were being consigned to the flames. The light as to which the assurance had come to Rammohun in his day to the effect that it had not been extinguished outright but had only to be still waited for to shine forth again—that light now came to be manifested and enjoyed as a glory in the soul of Devandranath in his turn. To him there came the reality of God-consciousness dissolving all scepticism, and with it the unfolding of all the rich possibilities of human-divine nature. Just recall one or two central teachings that we owe to the life so unfolded. Here is one profoundly wise utterance of truth—that God loves each one of us so much that, while we, little creatures, think He has given us enough of grace, He Himself is never satisfied with what He has given but seeks to give more and still more. That is Divine Love, according to Maharshi. It is the same truth that

is envisaged in Islam by the words, 'When I walk one foot towards God, He comes one mile towards me.' Again, it is the same truth that finds expression in the Parable of the Prodigal Son upon the lips of Jesus. God comes to us much more readily than we go to Him. Let us only think of it; and the hardest of hearts must melt. God is not indifferent but always attentively desirous of pouring into us more and more. Whether it is life without or grace within, it is the same story: God's bounty knows no bounds. As the forgiving God, as the pursuing God, He is always more than ready to bless us with His saving grace, even with His donation of Himself. Are there not moments of this exalted experience in the life of every one of us when we are led to ask, 'What is my value in this world that God should so care for me? My life is more filled and enriched by God than I am aware.'? The tongue cannot utter the word of praise befitting our God. If only you are a little thoughtful and reflective, you will know that every beat of the heart tells you your God is with you, He does not part with you, even in moments of loneliness when the whole world is steeped in silence and not the faintest whisper from outside is audible. Astronomers tell us that the sun is so many times bigger than the earth. I am but a little individual in a corner of the globe. I have a small eye. And yet He reduces, compresses, all that vast orb into the size of the pupil of my eye. Is this not wonderful in itself? Is not this normal miracle enough to make us realise how abundant His affection is for each one of us? And all that love is—why?

Not because He expects rewards ; but because of pure, spontaneous love, the love which ever knows but one tender sentiment : 'Darling, thou art Mine.' You can see a standing proof of this Divine Love in every whisper of breeze that breathes upon us. Therefore it is that Maharshi taught us the truth of the 'divine discontent' of God with the measure of His own love for man. The God of immensity and infinity comes into us to be closeted with us in the little heart-cell of communion. Can anything be more gracious? Maharshi saw God. Of that the proof is in this. He directly talks to Him. He holds intimate converse with Him. For our part, sing of Him we may, and talk of Him we may. But he speaks to Him direct. He does not argue. He merely says, 'Behold', as he once did to Prince Prasanna Kumar Tagore. And, at once, we realise that he says what he knows. That was precisely the reason why, when trials came, he did not feel deserted but was able to say, 'I have taken the pledge of *Brahmadharma*, and I must abide by it.' Again, 'I am Thy slave, not because I am deprived of my independence, but because I love Thee so much that Thou art given complete mastery over my whole self.' It is this devotion that has made Maharshi what he is to us. Therefore, we must feel with him vividly and effectively that God is a Living God, that He is within us, ever quickening every pulse of our inmost being.

PRARDHANA and ASEESH

Oh Lord ! How a new life, a new joy, is put into us as we think of that life ! Strengthen and secure in

us the faith that in Thee we are safe for ever. In the midst of so much of excitement, do Thou fill us with the *santham* and the *sivam* which alone will introduce us into Thy inner chamber. May our Maharshi be a beacon-light unto us all ! May we be filled with the faith that the days of maharshis are not gone but are still existent and operative and there is still hope for us ! May Thy truth and righteousness well in us ! May Thy holiness sanctify us !

Om ! Brahma Kripahi Kevalam !
Om ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Santhih !
Om ! Harih ! Om !

VI
BIRTH-DAY FAMILY SERVICE *
(1925)

UDBODHANA

HYMN—*Nedū manamandaram goodi*(Telugu)

Om ! Parabrahmane namah ! Our humble, reverent salutations and obeisances unto the Supreme One who, reaching beyond the limits of time and space and living and enduring from eternity to eternity, yet invites Himself in His measureless mercy into our humble homes and lowly hearts ! Our salutations and our obeisances, our devoutest *pranamams*, unto Him, the Supreme One ! Herein lies His true greatness, His matchless majesty, that, while in Himself limitless and boundless, He yet descends for our salvation into every little nook and every small corner of space and time. If He stood aloof in His greatness, how miserable should be our position ! If He, at the same time, were not great beyond our utmost thought and imagination, how poor would be our Providence ! Providence reaching out we know not how far, enduring we cannot state how long—that is the very basis of our faith and our hope. The Providence flowing in countless channels and in numberless ways into each individual heart and into each particular home—that Providence is our strength and

*In Pithapuram Palace on the Fifteenth Birth-day of the Yuvarajah (4-10-'25).

our joy, our comfort and our bliss. Our humble, lowly salutations and obeisances unto Him! As He, in His mercy, thus enters into the smallest of our concerns; into the least of our lives, how easy, how natural, it is that we should feel He is now and here with us! By whomsoever built, for whatsoever purpose intended, this apartment where we are met is truly a temple of God, is really a shrine of the Holy Spirit. And in the temple, there can be none but worshippers. In the shrine, there is no room except for sanctity. Thus, the worshippers meet in the family sanctuary to adore the Sacred One. This is heaven on earth, present paradise. Blessed be the name of the All-holy, All-merciful God that He has granted unto us this supremely blissful hour! In how many ways His mercy appeals to us and witnesses itself unto our hearts on this occasion! Is not the record of His mercy beyond the possibilities of human interpretation? How every footstep, every heart-beat, every minute of existence, every word uttered, every thought conceived, every sentiment cherished, every relationship maintained, every endeavour put forth here in the round of daily life from morn to night, so full of occupation with its untold concerns and its countless details—how the whole of it comes home to us as the very expression of God's mercy! There is no ordinary and no special, no secular and no religious, no profane and no sacred division in this life. Life, as the God who indwells it, is all special, all spiritual, all sacred; and every look of the eye, every wave of the hand, is really impelled by God's own personal presence. Thus realised, how sweet and hallowed the

whole of life becomes and how every happiness in life proves to be a message of Divine mercy, a dispensation of Divine grace, a token of God's direct interest ! As we feel this immensity of God's mercy, this individuality of God's care, this directness of God's relationship, this immediacy of God's presence, we fill with a joy that no words can describe, aye, with a bliss that no thought can conceive. Let us, then, sing His glory with hearts bounding with the joy and the bliss of His love.

ARADHANA

HYMN—*Anandamritha namah* (Sanskrit)

As we have sung, so art Thou truly the Adored One in the temple of the spirit—*Manasamandira*, our Inner Self, our Truer Self, the Self that emerges in us from eternity into time and extends beyond into eternity. In that truly holy spirit, spirit born of Thee, spirit inspired by Thee, spirit enlarged by Thee, spirit immortalised by Thee — in that holy spirit Thou findest Thy shrine, Thy *mandiram*. And as we adore Thee as the Adorable One of the soul, we become truly kindred unto Thee ; and we rejoice to find in Thee on all sides, in all directions, boundless, measureless, fathomless infinity itself. As the beginningless One, Thou art eternal — the Truth, the Reality, the Substance, the Inner Life of this infinite creation. Thou art the Foundation of existence. Thou art the Spirit that maketh life true and real. But for Thee,

there would be no union of one minute with another, no experience of one event after another. The complete circle of life is what is put forth by Thee as Thy own self-expression in the universe. Thou art *Sathyam*, the Truth that makes every word uttered in the spirit of truth a text in the gospel of the infinite God. The lip shall not utter that which the heart does not conceive, that which the soul does not impel. And as the heart and the soul express themselves through words, even flying words become eternal messengers of Thy *Sathyam* going forth on their pilgrimage from end to end of the world. Thou art *Sathyam*. The firm earth under the foot, the lasting firmament over the head, the ceaseless dance of the breeze, the endless chorus of song from grove and garden, the perennial flow of water through rill and river, the unbroken smile of the sea, the serene majesty of the mountain, the eternal march of the orbs, the limitless aspiration of the heart, the wisdom that issues from the soul of the sage, the inspiration that emanates from the good unto the truthful — all are chapters in that gospel of *Sathyam* of which Thou art the Revealer. How variedly yet how well-adjusted to every time and every place, how aptly adapted to every home and how finely fitted to every heart Thy *sathyam* works out its purpose! Unto the sinful, *Sathyam* comes now as remorse, then as hope, next as strength and finally as salvation. Unto the wise, *Sathyam* reveals itself first as thought, next as wisdom, then as gospel and finally as God. And, likewise, *Sathyam* wears a myriad forms and yet embodies the same truth, even as the same

God is the single Source of all truth. We bow down before Thee as the God of *Sathyam*.

Again, *Santham* is the purpose of Thy *Sathyam*, what *Sathyam* ever seeks to achieve — the Peace that is the harmony of the many in the unity of the all-embracing. This *Santham* Thou alone canst grant unto us. For Thou art Peace; Thou art the Abode of Peace; Thou art the Accomplisher of Peace; Thou art the Champion of Peace; Thou art the unfailing Guarantee of Peace. Look answering unto look, life intermingled with life, nation companioning nation, age reaching out unto age, star twinkling in response to star, flower smiling to flower in the freshness of fragrance, ray merging in ray to enter the eye and enkindle the sight, song blending with song as they break forth from the heart to glorify the Creator—all are but so many tunes in the eternal music of Peace, of Harmony. Unto Thee as *Santham* we render our hearts' obeisances.

And as Thou ever seekest to establish the Kingdom of Peace, the whole creation becomes but one manifestation of Bliss, of Beatitude, of *Anandam*. Thus, one with Thee, one in Thee in spirit, loving all in Thee, rendering up all for Thy service, devoting all to Thy glory, we dwell in the realm of *Anandam*. *Anandam* is our abode; *Anandam* is our asylum; *Anandam* is our home; *Anandam* is our eternal life, *Amritham*. Through the *Amritham* of *Anandam*, the immortality of bliss, Thou manifestest and Thou realisest Thyself. We glorify Thee, we bow before Thee, with the acclaim,

Anandamrithanamah. Our salutations, our obeisances, from the depths of our being we place at Thy footstool with all the genuineness of true worshipfulness. Thou art the God of boundless beatitude. *Anandamrithanamah !*

HYMN—*Emani piluthunu ninnu* (Telugu)

Thou the Supreme God, the Lord of all, the Sovereign whose rule extendeth over the whole imaginable universe! Thou the Infinite One, the All-perfect Being! As we understand Thee as the One Absolute Existence, we stand in awe and reverence before Thy presence; and, as the spirit moveth, we try to name Thee and praise Thee. But as Thou, in Thy illimitable love, comest to dwell with each one of Thy children, we are simply amazed as we experience more and more how intimate Thy relationship is with each one of us. Wherever we turn, in whatever occupation we engage ourselves, in each individual duty, in each particular partnership, in each single relationship, aye, in the whole detailed round of life, we find Thee present with us and in us; and we feel bewildered and ask ourselves, 'What shall we call Thee? How shall we name Thee? How shall we designate Thee? And under what particular conception shall we characterise Thee?' As, by turns, the days and the seasons come round, and moods and movements pass in and over us, and the heart, the mind, the body and, within all these, the spirit feel Thy touch, we voluntarily burst out with the impulse of calling Thee by this or that name. Charmed

with Thy tenderness, we call Thee Mother. Attracted by Thy affection, we call Thee Father. Drawn by Thy solicitude, we call Thee Friend. Standing in awe before Thy wisdom, we call Thee Preceptor. Sharing our joys and sorrows with Thee, we call Thee Spouse. Feeling the good cheer of glowing joyousness before our eyes, we call Thee Child. Looking up in gratitude and embracing Thy feet in reverence, we call Thee Lord. Perceiving Thy gracious presence everywhere, we call Thee Companion. Looking down on the flower, we call Thee Beauty. Looking up at the star, we call Thee Glory. Touched gently and sweetly by the passing breeze, we call Thee Harmony. Beholding the majesty of creation, we call Thee Sovereign. And yet, retiring into contemplation in the heart, we once again confess we cannot name Thee, and we only say, 'Thou the Nameless One of a thousand names'. Thou art our Treasure ; Thou art our Wealth ; Thou art our Storehouse of Bliss. As the dear one turns to the beloved and finds the whole charm of life focussed in smile and look, in soft whisper and silent touch, so in Thee we discover all that the heart desires, all that the soul aspires after, all that the thought reaches out to, all that the senses perceive and enjoy ; and we call Thee our All-in- all. Thus we praise and glorify and bless Thee, even as we are baffled in our attempts to give Thee a name adequately worthy of Thyself. Again and again, we sing Thy glory as the Supreme One whom it is beyond our humble powers to praise. And yet we feel Thou art alone praiseworthy and to praise Thee is the sole purpose of our life.

DHANYAYADASAMARPANAMU and PRARDHANA

HYMN—*Koniyada tharame ninnu* (Telugu)

As the thought ranges over vast realms of mind and sinks exhausted, as the imagination flies up into expanding heights and descends down into the recesses of humble awe and reverence, we recede into the heart and desist from the daring task of naming and describing Thee; and we seat ourselves in Thy lap, there to talk to Thee and hold intimate converse with Thee as our own dear God. Thou art the Sovereign of the universe. But more than that, Thou art the sweet, adored God of the home. Unto those whose reach of thought and imagination is vast, Thou picturest Thyself as the Infinite One. But unto us, humble and contented adorers, Thou comest as Parent and Protector, as Friend and Companion. As we sit with Thee and talk to Thee with the ease and familiarity of fearless intimacy and with the directness and fulness of personal appeal, we find ourselves at home and lay bare before Thee all that is in our hearts. On this thrice-happy occasion, our own dear God, we own and acknowledge Thee as the Parent and Protector, as the Head and Guide, of this our home. We could not be a home, we could not form into a family, we could not exist together in the sanctum of this dear abode, were it not for the fact of the ever-dear, ever-fresh consciousness in us that Thou art the Head and Guide, the Friend and Protector, of every individual and family. If the body is precious for the sake of the spirit, if the spirit finds its shrine in the body, if soul is drawn to soul, if heart is endeared

to heart, if thought recognises kinship in thought, if love is answered with love, if the various engagements and occupations of social existence shape and unify us into one life, it is because Thou art the all-inclusive, all-embracing, all-sufficing Parent, Custodian, Guardian, Care-taker, Guide, Protector, Friend, the adored God, the beloved God, of our family. For this supreme bliss how can we sufficiently thank Thee? The one made twain, the twain amplified into the several, the several held together as a unit, and the unit expressing itself in multifariousness — this is all Thy doing. Oh dear God, do Thou in Thy majesty deign to accept our humble tribute of praise and thanksgiving. We live on the bounty of Thy mercy. It is Thy mercy that feedeth and fostereth each one of us and all of us together. It is Thy mercy that, day after day, hour after hour, nay, every moment, has upheld us and been the care-taker of all the gifts of life for us. And unto Thee, as the ever-merciful God, we render our most grateful thanks. It is not the body alone that Thou hast cared for and fostered. The body made merely the vehicle and the medium of thought and sentiment, thought and sentiment emerging out of love and reverence, Thou hast thus been present through the whole process of our life as its very Life, its true Source, its perennial Power. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we glorify Thee. If the grass grows soft under our feet, if this pile of buildings remains steadfast over our heads, if the work of our daily life goes on unchecked, if the duties devolving upon us are found acceptable, if the relationships of life have amplified our horizon,

if on the call to self-denial we have rendered ourselves any time unto Thy service and for Thy glory, if in sorrow we have been comforted, if in troubles we have been relieved, if in perplexities we have been assured, if in joys we have been cheered, if in reverent praise we have been taught to wait on Thee, if in the birth of a new child we have welcomed Thy advent, if in the growth of every child we have witnessed the expansion of Thy purpose, if the enemy has been re-nestled in the bosom, if every friend and acquaintance and every form of wealth has come home to us as only a mark of the triumph of truth, if the faithfulness of servants has been to us a homely token of the warmth of kindness, if all relationships, loyal and loving, have been an expression of kinship in spirit with us, if the teachers have taught and the pupils have learnt with mutual goodwill, if spouse has responded to spouse in the fulness of the heart's ardour, if the children have kindled hope in the bosoms of the parents — in all these concerns, Thou hast been our *Grihadevatha*, the God of our Home. How inexpressibly sweet, how indescribably dear, how immeasurably blessed Thou dost become unto us as we realise Thee as the God of our Home! For all this we render our whole-hearted thanks unto Thee. Our poor expressions, our paltry thoughts, our narrow sentiments—they must prove all too unworthy of Thee but for the fact that, when offered in devotion, Thou dost never decline to accept even a little flower as a token at Thy adored feet. We bring the flowers of fervent love as tokens of gratitude unto Thy feet, oh our beloved God. And as we place them

at Thy footstool, we are sure and certain that Thou wilt accept them, even while we shed upon these humble offerings of ours the heavenly ambrosia of tears—tears of joy, tears of gratitude, tears of penitence, tears of hope. Blessed be Thy name !

And, oh dear God, rendered doubly, trebly, manifoldly dear to us in this daily, hourly, intimate relationship, we gather around Thee on this occasion to acknowledge over again how Thou hast been merciful, inexcessibly merciful, inconceivably merciful, transcendently merciful unto us. We shall not talk of Thee as one seen with the eye of flesh. And yet we hold Thee to be the sole Reality of our existence as the living and loving God, the dear and near God, the God that is ever with us, the God of our family, our *Grihadevatha*, our *Ishtadevatha*. And as we bless Thee, oh dear One, we particularly bless Thee and specially glorify Thee on this day when every limb thrills with gratitude and the heart itself pulsates the faster with thankfulness. For, this day is unto us a day of renewed assurance of Thy mercy. Our own dear darling, attaining the completion of fifteen years, comes to us, this day, fresh from Thy own loving hands to be deposited in our welcoming hearts as a new proof of Thy mercy. So our whole being fills with joy, as we think of this day. Beloved God, Thou hast made this beloved one doubly beloved unto us. We irresistibly recall and remember the manifold manifestations of Thy mercy through all these fifteen years of growth in this, Thy gift unto us. We recollect how the heart

that now rejoices at the sight of the crescent moon is the self-same heart that felt anguished at the threatening eclipse in the past, the heart that watched with anxious interest the blooming growth of the life and its faculties, the heart that caught the whisper of hope in the lisp of tender accents and the heart that by degrees has come to perceive the fulfilment of its own prayers to be enabled to sing the song of thank-offering unto Thee. Blessed be Thy name ! Thou dear God, humble mortals as we are who cannot but count in months and years the solemn pilgrimage of eternity, we conceive with the limitation of mingled feelings how our dear darling has passed from childhood to youth—the feeling of joy that Thy mercy has endured ever so long, the feeling of hope that the same mercy will hold on in increasing volume, and yet also the feeling of concern as to what future awaits him. We would not, however, ask for exemption from all cares and anxieties ; but we would pray that as changes and vicissitudes come, we might be granted the insight to know and feel assured that these are all but varied expressions of Thy mercy. As we have ever prayed and shall continue ever to pray till prayer merges in vision as it passes beyond time into eternity, we beseech at Thy hands this one gift, the gift of all gifts, that our dear child might prove worthy of Thee and, through Thy grace, shed upon this ancient House the lustre and the glory of a pure, noble and godly life. Oh Thou ever-watchful God, we know and we are sure that our dear darling dwells in Thy loving custody, nestled in Thy mercy and led by Thy wise hand along

his footsteps. Only, confirm and deepen in us this trust that Thou shalt remain his unfailing Companion and Protector. And as he has to face new problems, apply himself to new tasks, enter into new relations and receive new experiences, do Thou place before him in undimmed clearness of beauty the ideal picture of a life which finds its own fulfilment and realises its own bliss in the adoration and worship offered unto Thy spirit and in love and service rendered unto Thy glory. May our dear darling achieve this supreme end of life through Thy grace ! He is, as we hope and believe and pray, meant for a good purpose. And as the world measures a good purpose, may that purpose in its goodness tend all unto Thy glory ; and may he thus be robed in the light and hallowed in the sanctity of Thy love and service and thus present unto us and those that come after us a witness that God is Love, that God is Holiness ! We shall not prescribe wise methods unto Thee and tell what shall be done or what withheld. Thou knowest the best and intendest the most benign of means. Grant us faith enough that we may ever confide in Thee and claim of Thee the grace to be established in the trust that Thou art ever with us and this dear darling. How many are the sacred responsibilities to be reposed on his shoulders ! May he realise them ! May he be true to them by rendering unto this home and its dependents the entire devotion of his heart and the whole service of his life ! May he thus prove to be a true and worthy descendant of an ancient line only by means of usefulness through power ! Dear God, we beseech Thee,

vouchsafe unto the doting parents all the wisdom of insight, clearness of purpose, strength of devotion, sweetness of love and sanctity of faith that unto him they might prove Thine own real representatives—the kind, tender and pure-hearted mother and the wise, loving and guiding father representing together Thy providence, the providence that cherishes and the providence that guides. May the growth of the child be really the imparting of the parents' spirit unto the bosom of the offspring, thus to be preserved and perpetuated through the children and through the children's children! And may those gathered around him as his kith and kin receive the embrace of love and regard amidst that disinterestedness of companionship which makes unity the expression of Thine own divine purpose in human lives! May he, as he grows, feel how Thou hast meant him to be Thy servant, Thy worshipper and Thy child! How can I, a frail creature, picture the great future that stretches before this child? And yet, even to my vision is disclosed the vast reach of pilgrimage that lies before him! With the powers in him developing, the faculties in him expanding and the opportunities before him multiplying, may he justify himself as a light-bearer, a messenger of peace and hope, of truth and faith, unto all that look up to this House as a chosen centre of God-life! And as he thus proves faithful unto the duties of life, may he be more and more transformed into Thy spirit! And the dear ones after him, the sisters and brothers—may they prove real followers in his footsteps! As Thou hast knit them together and established them as a cluster

of flowers upon one parental stock, may they blossom into a treasure of sweetness! May they be held together and prove that the family is only a manifestation of one spirit amid separation into many bodies! As they thus grow together, they will be the joy of our hearts and the hope of our lives under Thy direct guidance. May the richness of life in them be a manifestation of Thy mercy!

Unto myself, how auspicious, how happy, is this hour as I think of what I have been, what I am and what I feel sure that I shall be! How can I find words, how can I even muster the thoughts, that may give full expression to the depth of my gratitude on this occasion? The houseless one given a home in a palace; he that is declining into weakness vouchsafed a mother and a father and a dear circle of those whom he is permitted to embrace as the darlings of his heart! Oh merciful God, Thou hast given all this unto this sinner. How can he render adequate thanks for it? My heart, my feeling heart, my faithful heart, my thankful heart, my joyfui heart — this is all I have to offer unto Thee on this occasion. And as I am merged into, and imbedded in, this family, we feel that we are all one, knit into one in the truth of life through the convention of friendship. And even with the last thought of the mind and the last throb of the heart, it shall be our privilege to bless Thee that it is not the body of flesh but it is the Spirit of God that makes true kinship. And now, as I humbly bow before Thee, I gather to my bosom the darling of the day, and I pronounce

even with the presumption of the sinner, the benediction of peace, hope and joy on his beloved head. Bless him, I humbly implore Thee, with all the blessings of truth and love and holiness. May he grow in strength of body, in vigour of mind, in faithfulness to conscience, in tenderness of heart and in devotion of soul! And as Thou hast granted unto this poor creature, confirmed sinner as he is, the bliss of resting his eye and heart upon so many whom the world calls no one's but whom Thou embracest as Thine own in the dear home that Thou hast designed for them under the fostering care of its parents and prayerful sustainers, may they be received by the darling of the day as brothers and sisters in extended love and service! May he thus grow into the growth of true life and prove a humble witness unto Thy limitless mercy! We beseech Thy clemency upon one and all met under this roof as one fraternity. May each one of us be so strengthened in his own position and confirmed in his heart's hope that we may, through increasing usefulness, show that ours is a loving fraternity, a fraternity of which God Himself is the Parent! And as we thus grow, may we reach unto the world beyond and knit together countless souls into one congregation of worshippers and one comradeship of servants!

Blessed be Thou and Thy name now and for ever!

Om ! Brahma Kripahi Kevalam !

Om ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Santhih !

Om ! Harih Om !



VII
PANDIT VEERESALINGAM
MEMORIAL SERVICE*
(1938)

UDBODHANA

HYMN—*O Nadha neegun moka intha* (Telugu)

Om ! Parabrahmane namah ! Jnanadathre namah !
Unto Him the Supreme One, who shapes the destinies and guides the footsteps of one and all, unto Him we render our reverent obeisances on this auspicious occasion. Blessed be His hallowed name that He has thus brought us together for a solemn sacrament ! May He in His boundless grace vouchsafe to us the right understanding and the humble spirit that will receive light and strength from Him and through Him on all occasions along the whole course of life ! He is alike the Indicator of the path, the Companion of the path, the eternal Realisation and Fulfilment of the path. We bow before Him and invoke His blessing upon our humble, lowly, adoring souls. Blessed be His name, blessed be His name, blessed be His name !

Unto man alone in the whole creation is vouchsafed the yearning to live a life set to a noble end. All

*At Brahmopasana Mandir, Cocanada (27-5-'38).

other creatures follow the guidance of instinct. Man alone is called upon to pursue a higher course leading to the noblest goal. Thus alone he becomes God's own humble and consecrated emissary for achieving God's own purposes in life. For man, life is a sacred trust and a hallowed benediction to be realised for eternal usefulness and universal benefit. Thus man is to God the very instrument and agent for the fulfilment of His lofty and holy purposes. And he who so acquits himself is God's own gift to humanity, even as he proves to be a fulfilment of God's own purposes. For, we do perceive in the life of God-ordained men a divine purpose and an everlasting and ever-increasing benediction from on high. Such a man is a light on the path of the pilgrim. And for such a man we are beholden to the Giver of all good ; and we render our offering of gratitude unto the Lord for vouchsafing such a gift to us. In our own day and amidst ourselves we have had a rare career of God's own ordaining. May He, the supreme Giver of all holy strength, vouchsafe unto us the adoring humility to receive the inspiration of so exalted a life on this occasion !

ARADHANA

Thou art the Author of life and the enduring Strength of life. Thou art the unfailing Light on the path of life. Thou art the Goal that life makes for in endless pilgrimage. We are here to adore Thee as the Fulfiller of life's destiny. We invoke Thy holy presence with us and in us, that we may be enabled to

worship Thee in the right spirit and receive the rich gifts of fresh inspiration from Thyself. Do Thou, in Thy boundless grace, vouchsafe unto us the full benefit of this sacred occasion which Thou hast created for our own behoof. Blessed be Thy name !

Sathyam, Jnanamanantham, Brahma, Anandaroopa, mamritham, yadvibhathi Santham, Sivamadwaitam, Suddhamapaviddham.

We are Thy adorers, and Thou art our hearts' ever-adored One ; and in the worship that is prompted by Thine own indwelling spirit, we seek to realise Thee in and through the whole process of Thy eternal Being abiding in time, reaching out through time, and for ever subsisting beyond time. Thou art the Eternal One, the ever-manifesting One, the ever-evolving One, the ever-resolving One, the ever-resuming One, the ever-immortalising One. Thou art unto us the Truth that is at once the Source, the Substance and the Sustenance of life. Thou art the Wisdom that takes in at once the whole process of the world's infinite progress. Thou art the all-unfolding One, that all-embracing Vastness out of which are extracted infinite tokens of life. As Thou art *Sathyam*, Truth ; Thou art *Jnanam*, Wisdom ; and Thou art *Anantham*, Endless Being. We worship Thee as the God of Truth ; we yield ourselves unto Thee as the God of Wisdom ; we dwell in Thee as the God of Infinity. Thou dost figure Thyself forth ever in this universe through created life. Thou dost reveal Thyself not only as the

ever adored God but also, more dearly, as the ever-incoming God. Thou art *Anandaroopamamritham*—the Love that manifesteth Itself in bliss, the inextinguishable bliss of life immortal. As Thou manifestest Thyself through *Anandam* in myriad forms and realisest Thyself in *Amritham*, we assimilate Thine own self. And thus we receive *Santham*, the serenity of trust and confidence and whole-hearted devotion unto Thee, the God of *Sivam*, Beneficence. We receive that peace, and that bliss which make us not only Thy children and Thy adorers but also the very partners of Thy immortal being. As we thus receive Thyself, we are gathered into unity of spiritual life, *Advaitam*, that life which embraces all and benefits one and all. And as we are thus resumed through all the affluence of manifold existence, Thou dost make us spotless and immaculate so that we may live the life of sanctified worshippers in Thee. Thou art *Suddhamapapavidham*, that absolute purity and profundity of holiness which Thou seekest to evolve in every soul. Beginning with Thee as the Transcendental One, entering into Thee as the all-sustaining One, gathered into Thee as the all-embracing One, enjoying Thee as the all-tranquil and serene One, perfected in Thee as the all-holy One, we ever dwell in Thee, we worship Thee with the understanding of the heart, the adoration of the soul and the beatitude of our whole being. Blessed be Thou! May we thus be ever Thy worshippers in truth, love and righteousness and in glorification of Thee as the Beatific One! Blessed be Thy name now and for ever!

DHYANAMU

To worship Thee is our supreme joy ; to commune with Thee is the fulfilment of our life. As the God of the inspired spirit, we beseech Thee to grant unto us the deeper and sublimer bliss of holding intimate and enraptured communion with Thee. Thou art ours not merely to be worshipped but to be realised, to be received into ourselves and rendered back unto the universe. Do Thou grant unto us this supreme bliss of communion !

(Congregational Chant)

As Thou art the Pilot over the profound main of this unending life, we render ourselves, with confident hearts and trustful souls, to Thy sure protection, to Thy wise keeping. Do Thou lead us out of untruth into truth, out of darkness into light, out of the depths of unrighteousness into righteousness and holy living. Abundantly gracious One, we beseech Thee, do Thou reveal Thyself unto us as the holy, benignant and protecting One ; and keep us for ever steadfast in Thy love and service and worship. In thus loving, serving, worshipping Thee, we fulfil Thy design and our destiny. Thou the Lord God, how can we ever realise Thee unless Thou revealest Thyself unto us ? We do not reach Thee by our seeking ; but we come to Thee by Thy incoming and indwelling presence. Thou art the God that impels our adoration ; and we turn to Thee even because Thou dost precede us by drawing us unto Thyself. Thou art the God that evokes worship and for ever fulfils that worship, Thou art unto

us the intimate God, the self-revealing God, the self-resuming God, the self-fulfilling God, the God of truth, wisdom and goodness. And thus the whole of our higher, truer life is brought into the intimacy of personal touch evermore with Thee. Blessed be Thy name as the inspiring God, as the sustaining God and as the fulfilling God! As we receive these proofs and tokens of Thy inexhaustible affection for us, we praise and glorify Thee, and we become animated by all the eagerness of devout adorers. Blessed be Thy name!

On this auspicious day, we are vividly and inspiringly moved with the conviction that Thou art ceaselessly engaged and intimately connected with each one of us, even while Thou manifestest Thyself through all time and through the whole area of creation. Of the manifold witnesses of Thy grace and Thy goodness, we have received one inspiring example. Truly, that life is of Thy shaping; and that message is Thy gospel that Thou art the God of truth, love and righteousness. Living with us and amidst us, our noble leader wrought to inspire that truth, to enrich that love and to establish that righteousness. For this blessing we are here to render our devout thanks unto Thee. Do Thou grant us the true realisation that Thou hast set up amongst us a living proof of Thy tender care and loving interest and that through this witness we have been made the objects of Thy grace. Bless us with the right understanding, and inspire us with full trust and reverence, that we may realise Thy protecting grace as made known through this latest

testimony of Thy purpose. Blessed be Thy name, blessed be Thy name, blessed be Thy name now and for ever !

UPADESAMU

Fellow-worshippers of the One Only God,

We are here blessed with this privilege—that we gather together, unified by the common admiration intensely evoked by a noble life as the token of God's grace through a long span of years. May the God of grace teach us to understand the nobility of that life and impart to us the blessing of that grace in leading our own lives ! It is a rich blessing that God has, time and again, vouchsafed unto us to come under the sanctifying influence of a God-illuminated soul. And it is this holy influence of a God-loving, God-serving life that makes us true men and good. There is an Arabic word '*hyvon*' which means 'one having no life' and 'the animal.' As against '*hyvon*', there is the word '*insan*' which denotes 'the man in whom we find God-inspired and God-conscious life.' Not to have the true life is to be the animal ; and the true life is the God-conscious life—the animal, properly so called, being, that which is bereft of that life.

He whom we are here to render thanks for and pay homage to was a living soul possessed of God. Here we have to realise, as taught by great ones that have seen God, that He alone can reveal the true indications of goodness and godliness. Life is really a

sacrament, a sacred gift from God. And they are men of true faith who believe in some great and glorious, exalting and sanctifying ideal. They alone are *livers*, in the proper sense of the term. The life is the man. If one would be great, one must have true life in one. There is no heaven unless it be that which is indwelt by holy livers. Every great man brings home to us that he has that God-life in him. He whose sight is in one direction and whose movement is in another—he is anything but a wise man. On the other hand, he who fixes his attention upon one subject and whose whole trend in life moves in that direction—he is one who satisfies the definition given of the *sufi*, the wise man. The rest are mere stragglers who wander about in emptiness. One whose sight was in one direction and whose movement, too, was in the same direction—that was Sri Veeresalingam Pantulu garu. He fulfilled in his life the suggestive definition of a *sufi*, the eye set on a lofty goal and the whole life tending toward that goal. The essence of all his teaching is this: 'Would you live to some purpose? Is your life to be fruitful? Then, fix that life upon some noble end, let your movement be directed towards it; let the consciousness that God has meant this life for a great purpose operate as the sole driving-force behind all your energies.' Again and again, through such glorious lives as his, God brings home to us the fact that He is our Path-finder as well as our Goal. We have in us the power both to tread the path and to reach the goal of the great pilgrimage. It is such a man that is '*hy*', '*insan*', really a true man, a God-man. Veeresalingam Pantulu

garu was moved by that noble inspiration through all his life. If we closely study that life, we shall see there was never a day when he did not feel himself as under the eye of God. His life was dedicated to realising the purpose of God. All, of course, have some purpose or other in life; but they alone are true beings who lead really noble lives. It is they who constitute true lovers. Speaking of the Duke of Wellington, Tennyson says all his life was work. It is not that his was merely a busy life; but it was a life dedicated to God. For one like him, all man-made distinctions between work and worship do not exist. Some there are of whom it may be said that the consciousness of purpose in life came to them only late in their career. I believe that Pantulu garu was indwelt by the presence of God throughout his life. He must have been moved, filled, vivified, sanctified by the sense of the presence of God throughout his life. Thus alone he faced all the experiences and issues of life. There are no difficulties for God-illuminated lives. Difficulties are only propulsions to the higher life. What to the small man is a difficulty, is to the great man an opportunity. Pantulu garu, accordingly, made his whole life one of worship in work and work in worship. Worship and work are not two distinct things in life but are the joint concern of life. To such a man, there comes the crucial test — whether he forgets worship in the midst of work or work in that of worship. A genuine devotee mingles the two factors together by systematising worship as work and by sanctifying work with worship. In him, hand and heart accord so well that worship transmutes work even as work adds to

the richness of worship. Pantulu garu never ignored the truth that life is a gift and therefore must be rendered back to God with a proper account. What comes from God must go back to Him. "We have made thee for Ourselves", God said to the blessed Prophet of Islam; and the Prophet's reply was, "Yes; and I live for Thyself alone". Such a person always maintains the balance of equipoise, unmoved by praise or blame. In Pantulu garu's life-career, there were passages when he stood banished from man's law. Is it not the bare truth that he became and remained an eschewed and excommunicated man in society, simply because he turned to God and said, 'My heart is Thine; receive it and use it as Thy shrine.'? It matters not for the genuine devotee and servant of God whether others also enter into the solemn league and covenant with him or not. It is not correct either to think that a great life is always in harmony at all points with his environment in the body politic. Rather, he is the great man whom the world does not want for its ease and comfort and who is himself content to take life upon those terms. To be a deserted man is the initial stage for getting into God-life. As Pantulu garu himself has recorded, there was a time when no one would render ordinary domestic service to him and Amma garu had to fetch water from the Godavari. Of one who seeks to be made God's man, the animal-man's estimate is ever as of one who is no good for human use at all. This 'God's man' is always an exile, to begin with. In the lives of Jesus, Mahammad and other great men, we find in the beginning a chapter

of exile into the desert. It is renunciation by the world and resumption by God. Not required at the world's banquet in the early stages, the God-devoted, God-serving man is brought back, only later, to give to the world the true 'bread of life', even heavenly manna. The world fancies that it is all shaping its own destiny. This man comes to remind the world that the destinies of the world are really in His hands. After the exile, there follows the return, the incoming. 'Begone from Mecca', they said to Mahammad : that was the fiat of outlawry and expulsion with the sharpest shafts of execration. 'Come back to us'; that was the acclaim of recall and restoration amid the heartiest shouts of hip-hip-hurrah three times over. Time was when Pantulu garu's mere shadow was detested all round as a desecration which polluted the very atmosphere. They required protection from this contamination. The 'Jagadguru' accordingly, issued the ban of excommunication. Attempts of violence upon life and limb were also made; and Police aid had to be brought in to afford the needful shelter. The final sequel, however, turned out, as we now know, to be proof positive of the fact of God indwelling the soul, when the 'desecrator' came in due course to be hailed as a 'consecrator.'

The supreme lesson, then, of this life is that we should learn to live alone with the Alone. And to live alone with the Alone is to be sure that the Alone liveth alone with us and in us; it is also to receive from Him that holy strength by which we can

overcome and win the world. "Live pure, speak true, right wrong, follow the King"—the King of the human soul: such was the vow enjoined by Arthur upon his Knights. It is the life devoted to such noble ends, the life moved by such lofty ideals, that alone becomes a knightly life, the life of a saving and sanctifying knight, not of a fighting and pillaging knight. He becomes a God-appointed defender of truth and righteousness. Pantulu garu's whole life was dedicated to this supreme object: 'How shall I vindicate the right; how infuse the spirit of purity into hearts and homes; and how bring all spirits into the embrace of harmony?' A great life cannot be fully realised in the narrow span of earthly existence. Hence, it is little wonder that our hero did not fully realise his mission here below, as no single great man ever did. Yet he could so shape the society and so purify the atmosphere around him and so mould the ideals and the endeavours of his fellow-men that it might aptly be said of him that he was the great harbinger of the coming day of full-orbed Andhra glory. In himself he constituted both a warning and an invitation—a warning against the commonplace life of selfish secularity and an invitation to the lofty labours of selfless sanctity. This essential feature of Pantulu garu's lifelong aim and achievement should be kept clearly in view. He was a believer. We all remember the story about the vision of John Wesley. The door-keeper of heaven asks, 'Who are you?' 'I am a Welseyan', comes the answer. 'We have not heard of Wesleyans here.' 'Are there no Protestants?' 'No'. 'No Christians?' 'None'. 'Then, who are

those that are here?' 'Only *believers*'. Heaven is indwelt by believers. It is the believers that constitute heaven, believers in the Supreme Being, in the sanctity of the soul and in the destiny of the race. In this way, Pantulu garu was a triple believer. Hence difficulties daunted him not; they only moved him to larger activities and carried him to more glorious victories through the power of faith. Into his soul he gathered the vital force of divine life, that force which wins not through the might of the sword but by the spell that appeals to the godlike in man. Therefore, such a one must needs attain triumph in the end. Consequently, Pantulu garu is not gone; he is not a relic of the past; he is no mere memory of a bygone generation. He still is, doubtless, a living force, a spirit continuing to move us. We are, indeed, moved by that spirit which moved him. Wherever there is honour accorded to truth and allegiance rendered to justice, wherever there is evidenced an ambition to nobler ends, there Pantulu garu's spirit is still at work as a living power. That spirit has verily symbolised itself in his life for the behoof of his true inheritors. Unto his God and our God we turn this day, not with the bereaved sense of those that have lost but with the grateful sense of those that have received a rare blessing, even the blessing, of a noble, God-inspired life. With all the reverence due to true greatness, greatness of the most exalted type, we shall ever glorify the Giver of all good gifts and bless Him gratefully that He has vouchsafed unto us the inestimable heritage of a great soul and a great life. Blessed be His name, blessed be His name !

DHANYAVADASAMARPANAMU and PBARDHANA

Thou art the God of the living, the God of the loving, the God of the serving, the God of the saving, the God of the sanctifying soul. Unto Thee we renew our humble obeisances on this occasion. Thou hast immeasurably enriched our assets through the heritage of a great life. May that gift dwell in us and inspire us along the whole round of our pilgrimage, helping us in the ascent from the now to the everlasting, from limited good to unlimited grace ! Be Thy blessing for ever with that venerated soul which abides even now in Thy bosom, not resting and reposing but rendering love and service without ceasing ! May we be moved with that devotion which has made his life an inspiriting gospel unto us ! May the seed sown by his hand grow with the progress of time so that in the fulness of life it shall develope into a sheltering and sustaining tree of benediction to all ! Blessed be Thy name now and for ever !

Om ! Brahma Kripahi Kevalam !

Om ! Santhih Santhih Santhih !

Om ! Harih Om !

VIII
FAMILY SERVICE*
(1916)

UDBODHANA

HYMN—*Nedu manamandaramu goodi* (Telugu)

Praise, glory and salutations unto Him whose greatness, whose wisdom, whose righteousness and whose goodness are sung forth all the worlds over ! From every quarter of the universe there perennially goes up the chorus of hallelujah. To praise Him is to procure the purest pleasure, to revel in the most enrapturing joy, past all studied expression and beyond all calculated measure. With the coming of spring there comes, as if by magic, a new life and beauty, a new strength and joy, working a wonderful change all around us. How can we remain calm and silent as though with the repose of winter ? Our hearts voluntarily dance with delight, and our souls spontaneously sing the glory of the Lord—our own beloved, our own endearing Lord. Him we cannot but praise whilst, amid this reawakened life, this re-established beauty, this reinstated glory of the world, we behold how the face of things wears a new smile in green and gold, in hope and hilarity. Are we so far

* In Pithapuram Palace (26-3-'16).

palsied in feeling that we should remain altogether unconcerned ; is Heaven's mercy so far denied to us that we should thus prove to be the one alien element, the only discontented factor, in this vast symphony of universal glorification ? Nay ; even within ourselves a new life is awakened, a new heart is quickened, a new hope is kindled and a new inspiration is set up. Blessed be the Ever-living God, the Ancient One of days, who is yet the ever-new God of now and here, that He has brought us together in this springtide through His own *udbodhana* for adoring Him with reinvigorated life and refreshed spirits !

ARADHANA

Thou art the adored Truth holding all centuries and generations together and ever unifying the manifold, mysterious operations of this cosmos into one purpose and design. Thou art Truth compact as the firm earth. Thou art Truth profound as the fathomless depth of the myriad currents of the ocean. Thou art Truth all-overarching as the expansive sky. Thou proclaimest Thyself as Truth in all ages, through numberless transactions and events. Thou vindicatest Thyself as Truth in all the varied walks of life. We bow down before Thee in reverent worship of Thy eternally sanctified, ever-sufficient, all-sustaining Truth. Blessed be Thy name !

Thy wisdom — oh, how unneringly it sees into, and enters, the very core of our inmost recesses !

From Thee nothing can be kept hidden; and the secrets of our inmost hearts open out clear in Thy light. There is no distance at which Thou art absent. There is no hiding-place of thought where we fail to find Thee. There is no danger in which Thou art not with us. Thou art the all-knowing, all-perceiving, all-judging God. Thou knowest our weaknesses, and Thou knowest also our possibilities. How blessed we are in that Thou art our Caretaker, our providential and ever-vigilant Friend, the Guardian of each one of us! We proclaim Thy glory; and we render our thanks unto Thee for Thy mercy. Blessed be Thou!

How vast, how far-reaching, how comprehensive, how all-baffling in itself is Thy infinity! Imagination cannot approach Thee in the continuity of Thy self-existence through all immensity and eternity. Absorbed in the boundlessness, merged in the vastness, lost in the absoluteness of Thy being, we are full and we are safe, all too imperfect and ephemeral as we are in ourselves. It is our eternal welfare that we are thus immersed—live, move and have our being—in the Infinite. Blessed be Thou!

Realising Thee both everywhere and everywhen as infinitely good, pure, holy, why should we hesitate to call Thee Mother? How else can we call Thee than as Mother — the Mother of all mothers; the Mother that maketh all mothers ever motherly; the feeding, the nursing, the cherishing, the sanctifying, the saving,

Mother? Ours is the privilege of calling Thee Mother—the sinner's redeeming Mother, the prodigal's reclaiming Mother. Thou art my own Mother, my benign Mother. Of a truth, the universe is my home, my cradle; every man and every woman in the whole world my brother and my sister; myself lifted by Thy mercy from the poverty of the prodigal to the plenty of the prince. Every hour teeming with Thy gifts, every occurrence bringing a new assurance of Thy unfailing care, Thou art the only Mother, my Mother. Yes; Thou art my Mother, and I am Thy child. I deserve not to be Thy child; yet Thou seekest to be my Mother. I wish to be lost in Thee, my Mother. My own benign Mother, how searching, how watchful, how ever-considerate Thou art that I should be saved! Aye; the salvation of the world is thus assured, guaranteed, verily, absolutely certain. I thank Thee with all my heart for this abundant mercy. Beyond doubt, the universe is not a burial-ground, not a place of banishment, but the home in which Thou hast kept and nursed me from the cradle onwards. This gift of Thine, the universe—how well-shaped, how artistically designed, how profusely furnished, how abundantly provided with all that I need! Every single minute's donation of the resources and pleasures of life is the outcome of Thy love and mercy. With all my heart I bless Thee. How is my feeling fully to be expressed that I should endeavour to proclaim Thy mercy? With a throbbing heart and a reverent soul, I render devout thanks unto Thee. Blessed be Thou, benign Mother!

All through eternity, Thou hast designed for us the greatest happiness with righteousness as the very end and purpose to be aimed at through ever-expanding powers sustained by Thyself. That is Thy saving righteousness. For righteousness is Thy nature ; righteousness is Thy essence ; and righteousness is Thy very being. Thou art the all-holy God. Thou art the Sanctifier of the unholy, Thou the *Pathithapavana*. Thou hast ever designed that even I should be saved so that all my sisters and brothers might rejoice in it. Oh, how wonderful Thy holy purposes and doings — Thy whole creation pure with pure air, pure water, pure hearts and pure inspirations ; all domestic relations pure ; all friendly relations pure ; the whole purpose and trend of life and its endeavours pure ! From purity to righteousness we are thus held on through all Thy agencies. We bow down before Thee humbly ; and we adore Thee with reverent souls. Glory, glory, glory unto Thee, oh Eternal God !

SANUTHAPAPRARDHANA

HYMN—*Vandanam sada ananda devatha* (Sanskrit)

Self-circumscribed is Thy being, oh Thou all-perfect, all-absolute, in Thy immensity and eternity. How, as the very essence of Thy existence, Thy love doth go forth to reveal and expand manifold and multiply itself ! And how Thou assumest into Thyself all seeming limitations and apparent multiplicity in the phenomena of life ! Thou art verily the wonderful God ;

for by Thee we are granted the supreme blessing now of realising Thee as the all-potent, all-manifest God and again of contemplating ourselves as if dissolving in Thee. Thou all-surpassing, all-transcendent, all-comprehensive God, we recognise ourselves now as humble co-workers with Thee and again as trustful servants depending on Thee ; now seeking to fulfil by ourselves our cherished desires and aspirations and again surrendering them as nothing but due entirely unto Thee. Thus we are blessed even through this pendulum of a life of trust in Thee and of endeavour after Thee. Our existence we owe unto Thee. It is due to Thy free, spontaneous gift that we are living, that we are granted life with its myriad and marvellous blessings—every faculty a miracle of mercy. Thus we praise Thee as the Author ; and thus we adore Thee as the Saviour. Thou art the Support and the Guide, the Way and the Goal. We surrender ourselves to Thy care ; and we beseech Thee for ever and ever to keep us, to protect us, to cherish us, to lead us out of untruth into truth, out of darkness into light, out of death into deathlessness. Grant that the radiant light of Thy countenance may fortify us against all dangers and temptations and that we may dwell in Thee under the guard and guidance of Thine own providence.

All-merciful One, the Father and Mother of every child ! We are Thy children. It is our profit, our pleasure, our privilege, our everlasting destiny, thus to approach Thee and place before Thee all our wants and disclose unto Thee all our secrets. We come unto Thee

again and again to re-enter into this renewed relationship with Thee. Lord God, Thou knowest our frailties, our weaknesses—how dire have been our sins, how miserable have been our ways, how we have repeatedly foiled all the purposes that Thou hast meant for us and how we have wilfully passed over all the opportunities that Thou hast granted unto us and wantonly disobeyed all the laws that Thou hast prescribed for our guidance. Thou knowest all we know. Thou knowest, too, more than what we realise and express. How very deplorably faulty our lives ! Oh, Thou merciful God, forgiving God, Thou the Saviour of the sinner, do Thou decline to take note of, except and unless it be to remedy and rectify, all our sins and shortcomings. They baffle all computation and all description. They are too gross, too heinous, even for contemplation. Yet Thou art the Purifier, the Sanctifier, the Regenerator. We stand before Thee not to receive judgment but to crave pardon, not to choose by the measure of our merit but to be chastened by the fulness of Thy mercy. We bow down before Thee, Thou all-forgiving, ever-pardoning, ever-clement God. Pardon us, purify us, put new life into us and create new strength and new hope in us. Exalt our ideals, we beseech Thee, above all pettiness and narrowness of purpose, and so shape and mould our lives as to be open to the finest susceptibilities and to all righteous suggestions so that we may see and feel a new working of Thy providence in our lives and be drawn into the holy embrace of Thy adoring devotees. This is our humble prayer. Do Thou most mercifully vouchsafe it.

PRARDHANA and ASEESH

Thou Lord God of all mercy ! Thou art the God of this household. Surely, this family is Thine, fostered in Thy care. Thy loving protection has been keeping and cherishing it so lovingly, so tenderly. We render our devout and grateful thanks unto Thee for the multiplying mercies and the ever-increasing loving-kindness that Thou hast been granting unto these dear ones. We praise Thee, we glorify Thee, that Thou hast been in every detail so merciful, so kind, so loving. And we invoke Thy continued blessings upon this family, that each member may rest under Thy guard and protection and all may seek to do what Thou hast intended for them as virtuous ones held together within the happy, holy embrace of domestic peace and felicity, of mutual love and kindness, of prompt sympathy and unfailing generosity. May they be blessed with the blessings of sustained fellowship with Thee ! May this family be even as a model of goodness and godliness unto all around ! And may all those who have come together today in love or hope, in prayer for help or in the fellowship of kindred aims—may all feel that here Thou hast fixed and stationed Thy ministering love to bestow peace and harmony ! May peace prevail ; may harmony flourish ; may love ever rule here ; and may the master and the mistress of the home with their beloved darlings ever be indwelt by Thy spirit, clothed with Thy purity, inspired by Thy love, exalted by Thy righteousness and, in every way, blessed with Thy blessings ! May all of

us prove faithful and cordial in the reciprocities of kindliness and render unto Thee the glorious and covetable account of such loyal discipleship and devoted service as shall make us all one family—the children of one Parent ! And may Thy breath like the bracing breeze be around and about this dear home, and may all its inmates feel the sanctity of sonship unto Thee and of kinship in Thee for ever !

May Thy truth triumph, Thy will be done, Thy Kingdom be established over all hearts, in all homes and quarters of the world ! Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thy name now and for ever !

Om ! Brahma Kripahi Kevalam !

Om ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Santhih !

Om ! Harih Om !

IX
SERVICE*
with Sermon on
'GOD, THOU ART LOVE.'
(1934)

UDBODHANA

Our reverent salutations, our adoring obeisances, we humbly and devoutly offer unto Him, the *Anandasagara*, the Ocean of Love and Bliss. Amidst our free confession and full acknowledgment of deep love and reverence for God as the *Anandasagara*, do we not feel exalted and transported with joy and bliss ourselves? Surely, the blessed utterance of that supremely joyous word, *Anandam*, makes us feel not merely the complete removal of the woes and ordeals of life but also the inrush of grateful and exquisite benediction that we are at and in the very Fountain-spring of all *Anandam*, of all Love. The body is not only freed from all weariness but quickened and strengthened with a new energy and a new joy. And our souls become immersed in the Ocean of Love, of *Anandam*, flung deep down into the very Heart of Love, of Bliss. We feel a new life, a new vigour, a new joy, altogether a new sense of reality. How charming is that celestial word, *Anandam*! None of the numberless words, none of the countless treasures, in the

*Brahmotsav closing service at Rajahmundry (25-1 '34).

universe, equals that word, *Anandam*, in variety and in measure. All the cherished records of the past, all the gathered experiences of the present, all the anticipated hopes and fears of the future—all are rendered sacred and sanctified, as we utter that heavenly word, *Anandam*, solemnly and reverently with the profound conviction of its reality not only upon our lips but in the centre of our souls. Poison, then, is transformed into nectar; gloom is transfigured into radiance; sorrow is transmuted into joy; weakness is nerved into vigour; ignorance is illumined into wisdom; poverty is blessed into opulence; sin is purified into saintliness. All these are the marvels and miracles of the might and mystery of *Anandam*. Whatever adverse forces tend to pull down towers of strength, reduce fertility into sterility and blast freshness into devastation, thus shaking the very foundations of faith, he who is even once vividly and explicitly impressed with the Divine Gospel knows that *Anandam* is the originating and the sustaining power behind the universe. He may with his human heart deplore; but despair he will not. He may grieve; but cease to trust he will not. He will feel the touch of the reassuring mercy of God that shall once again bind together the rent heart into the pulsating heart. *Anandam* is the perennial spring sprouting up from the centre of the universe. Be it in the bloom of the vestal virgin; be it in the silent, serene smile of the mother; be it in the vision of heavenly things; be it in the voice of harmony and melody—all are the manifold manifestations of, the multifarious testimonies to, *Anandam*.

And here we are to worship that God of *Anandam* — not merely praise Him, not simply speak to Him, not even commune with Him, but worship Him with souls rendered sacred by holy reverence. Here we are to worship the God of Love — Love overwhelming in the profundity of its depths, awe-inspiring in the sublimity of its heights.

ARADHANA

We bow down in awe and adoration, even as we say '*Anandam*'. Thou art the Holy One whose eternal relation to the universe is one of Love. Thy love, as the Holy One, unto the universe is begotten in holiness and is to be perfected in holiness. Thou, all-transcending One, eternally self-contained and eternally self-realised, Thou art the all-transcending One whom no one can describe. Thou art *Sathyam* ; Thou art *Jnanam* ; Thou art *Anandam*. These attributes are *anantham* in Thee — infinitudes which will always go beyond our understanding. But we have within us the germs — the essential, vital principles — of Thy own nature. Therefore, we know Thou art *Sathyam* ; we realise Thou art *Jnanam* ; we perceive Thou hast Thy being in *Anandam*. Sand-grains as we are in the immeasurable vastness of the universe, Thou hast gifted us with the power to know and to feel that Thou art the all-embracing, all-pervading and yet all-surpassing God of infinitude. As Thou art that Bliss, *Anandam*, which reaches out into the depths of all beings, Thou hast endowed us with the desire, the unquenchabl

desire, to enjoy all only in Thy name and unto Thy glory. And as Thou impartest Thy *Anandam*, Thou pronounceest Thy benediction upon those souls that are even by Thy grace enabled to declare that Thou art *Anandam*. Verily, to adore Thee as *Anandam*, to be refreshed by Thee as *Anandam* — that is *amritham*, immortality, partaking of Thine own inexhaustible Bliss. And this, oh Thou *Amritham*, Thou vouchsafest unto us. And only as Thou impartest Thyself as *Anandam* and *Amritham* do we feel Thee as *Santham* and experience that *santhi* in ourselves which perpetuates itself eternally through all time, that tranquillity which nothing can disturb, which survives all storms and tempests, and from which comes evermore that unbroken message of Thine as *Sivam*, 'Do thou live in *santhi*'. Then, as *santhi* dwells in *sivam*, these prevails profound harmony, a profound kinship of soul with soul in Thee as *Adwaitham*, the all-comprehensive One whose oneness knows no variety, the all-embracing One in whose oneness all are brought together into harmony as members. Thus unified for ever, we dwell in Thee in the hallowed spheres of joyous bliss, of fleckless holiness. For, as Thou art *Anandam*, Thou art also *Suddham*; and thus, not only sinless but sanctified, we dwell in Thee as Thy children. So, as Thy worshippers, we worship Thee; as Thy glorifiers, we glorify Thee.

SANUTHAPAPBARDHANA

Hallowed, hallowed, hallowed be Thy name! Thou God of all bounty, God of all benediction, God of all

beatitude, with heart-felt gratitude we render unto Thee our souls' devoutest obeisance for all the gifts of truth, wisdom, love, goodness, serenity and sanctity which Thou, in Thy stintless abundance, hast vouchsafed unto us. Father, what words — frail, human words ; faltering, human words—can express the depths of the tremendous gratitude that we owe for ever unto Thee ? Thou art all-surpassing Mercy. Through song and prayer, through discourse and sermon, through the outflow of aspiration and the inflow of grace, Thou vouchsafest, unto one and all, the feeling of the nearness as well as the dearness of Thy mercy. Thou alone canst vouchsafe this supremest blessing of worshipping Thee together. Thou alone canst vouchsafe this heaven on earth, bringing all of us together thus to sit together with Thee in the centre and ourselves all focussed around Thee, receiving light and love from Thee. Blessed is this worship ; and having come together thus to know Thee, to bear witness unto Thee and to proclaim Thee as the one Parent and Perfecter and Sanctifier of all, can we yet remain solitary and selfish ? No, no. If love has might and grace has virtue, we must feel not only stronger but happier in union, mightier for service, profounder for devotion, unto Thee. All-merciful One, how easily and unexpectedly Thou dost wipe out the memory of the record of our baseness ! How Thou ledest us out of the hell of iniquity into the celestial regions of righteousness ! Thy ready forgiveness and mercy— they are our only hope ; and so they elicit and evoke our prayers. Hallowed be Thou, our

God, so merciful and so gracious! Out of the depths of the fallen soul Thou givest us revived strength and rekindled aspiration. For all these blessings we render our whole-hearted thanks unto Thee. Thou hast vouchsafed to us, in particular, the benediction of loving one another and living all together in Thee. Thou hast endowed us with an outlook growing ampler, holier, day by day. Great God, how time flies; how hearts vanish; and how we make trifles of the issues of life! Yet, how Thou dost now and again kindle divine discontent in us and make us dissatisfied that we have never rendered Thee Thy due! Thou art not only prompt to forgive but ready to accept the broken, violated vows of the soul. Thou not only reshapest the soul but suppliest the material for its renewal. That is how Thy grace shows itself. Thou the Sovereign of all destinies! Thou the indwelling Spirit of all souls! How we have robbed Thee of Thy due and thrown away the talents Thou hast entrusted to us! Who can forgive? Forgiveness belongs to Thee. It is Thy prerogative alone. Prostrated, humiliated, self-consumed, we beg of Thee to pardon us for all the sins of omission and commission of the past. Do Thou vouchsafe that the new year may be a year not only of greater benefactions from Thee but of profounder adoration from us and of richer harvests unto us?

God of all Love, of all Grace, the Witness and the Receiver of all, we bow down before Thee and once again with repentant souls worship Thee to be uplifted by Thee, notwithstanding our failings and despite our

shortcomings. We earnestly desire to be Thine. The frailty of flesh may keep that desire in the dark recess of our worldly selfishness. Yet it springs up with all the rush of awakened longing once more to aspire after Thee. So do Thou make us Thine. Bring Thy heaven for us into this world. That is our desire ; that is our aspiration.

Oh Thou great and glorious God, may the coming year bear witness unto purer, fuller, loftier aspirations, holier communions, devouter adorations ! Grant this prayer. This granted, all else comes of itself. We seek to place our hands in Thy hands. Do Thou lead us that so we may become individually Thine, conjointly Thine, completely Thine — Thine through and through ; all the reflections of the mind Thine ; all the desires of the heart Thine ; all vows, all worship, all consciousness Thine. This is our humble prayer. Do Thou most mercifully vouchsafe this benediction unto us.

UPADESAMU

Sisters and Brothers,

I wish to offer a few thoughts on a line taken from Browning : 'God, Thou art Love. I build my faith on that.' If we can realise the significance of that one sentence, that will abundantly supply and satisfy the entire need of our souls for light and guidance.

'God, Thou art Love. I build my faith on that.'
This does not mean that God has no other attribute.

For humble, expectant, sorrowing, struggling, drifting creatures, the paramount virtue in God is Love. In the case of any of the objects in the world, you hold it and it is with you ; you let it go and it drops. But not so is it with God. The more you let Him go, the closer He draws to you. The sinner may say, 'I don't want Thee'. But God answers, 'All the more do I want thee.' The fretful, irate child may say, 'Do not come near me'. Yet the mother says, 'That is the very reason why I take care of you'. 'God', I say, 'I am a sinner, a black sinner, black as hell—a moral and spiritual leper. Oh, do not touch me.' But God says, 'Why, I must draw closer to thee'. The doctor's place is near the sick man. So God's place is near the sinful man rather than by the obeying and adoring soul.

'God, Thou art Love.' And Love bears wonderful faces. We think that Love bears only a rosy, radiant face. But Love bears at times awe-inspiring and frightening faces. Yes ; such a really terrific face Love bears as *Rudra*. Does this mean, then, a thundering and sweeping God? No. To the dark frowns of the rebellious soul, God does not appear as a mild and accommodating God but as an awe-inspiring God. So He transforms us through the sustaining power of Love assuming a variety of faces ; but always His is that invincible Love which subserves all needs. God kills the evil in the sinner and conquers him by Love. That is what is meant by God killing. He kills till the rebel is exhausted. Thus surely is the sinner saved. And such is the experience of every one who starts by abusing

God : he ends by glorifying God. God the Almighty conquers by Love. The great God is also the good God.

‘God, Thou art Love.’ Man works destruction through the engines of war — cannon, tank, trench, poison-gas and what not. And so far as eye-sight goes, nothing remains except one horrible spectacle of devastation. That is man’s doing. He is the agent of destruction. He is the Devil’s servant. But, even there, God once again makes the devastated battle-field tolerable and smiling with abundance. He guarantees world-restoration.

‘God, Thou art Love.’ The story of Buddha and the bereaved, weeping woman is instructive. She begs him to restore her dead child to life. To her he says, ‘My heart weeps with thee; and I will try. Please get me a handful of mustard-seeds from a house which knows no weeping’. She goes from house to house but cannot get the mustard-seed; for there have been deaths at some time or other in every house. Thus she becomes enlightened and receives comfort.

Whereas you and I seek to trace the hand of Love in the varied happenings of Law, Mahatma Gandhi holds, as he puts it in his Earthquake Appeal, that that occurrence is the visitation of Providence as a punishment for our sins. But such occurrences — are they not rather the ways than the visitations of the Lord? Spring and summer, night and day—are they not all the ways of the Lord? Time and all the cosmic

manifestations on the field of Time—are they not the ways of the Lord, different from His visitations ?

The story of Marcus Aurelius has much significance. He had a wife through whom he got the Roman Empire. When she proved faithless, he was asked by his countrymen to divorce her. He replied that he would have to leave the Roman Empire also in that case ; for it was through her that he had got the Empire. So, of the different experiences that come to us as interrelated parts of the same world-process, it will not do for us to accept some and reject others. But in and through all, it is for us to learn to say, 'God, Thou art Love'.

That Love bears innumerable forms as volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, tempests and the like. And we can realise it by faith. What is faith ? Faith is the Light from the flame of Life. Light has various functions. There is the Parable of Will-o'-the-Wisp or Jack-o'-Lantern in Mrs. Gatty's book of "Parables from Nature". In it, light is shown to have two parallel functions, namely, to guide you along the right path and to warn you from the wrong path. Accordingly, we have to render thanks alike for prayers granted and for prayers rejected, for the acceptance of prayers and for the refusal of prayers, for what the Lord gives and for what He giveth not. 'God, Thou art Love' is the only proper sentiment under all conditions.

The All-great God is also the All-good God. Greatness and Goodness are the expressions of the same

Divine Being. 'God, Thou art Love': in this are comprised the teachings and experiences of all the sages, all the prophets and all the saints.

ANTHYAPRARDHANA

'God, Thou art Love.' We live together in Thee as the God of Love. Do Thou vouchsafe unto us this boon of more and more living in Thee and living together in one another, Thou One only without a second.

Om ! Brahma Kripahi Kevalam !
Om ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Santhih !
Om ! Harih ! Om !

PRAYERS
AND
MEDITATIONS

i
THE MOTHER'S GRACE
IN THE GIFT OF LIFE *
(1938)

*Om ! Parabrahmane namah ! Om Pranapradathre
namah ! Om Hridayeswaraya namah !*

Thou the Spring and Fount of my being ! The Birth-day is the return of the day on which, out of the profundities of Thine own infinite being, Thou didst present unto a welcoming and adoring circle even this expression, this manifestation, this embodiment, this incarnation of Thy truth and love, righteousness and bliss. This new Birth-day, then—must it not be nearest and dearest, sweetest and holiest unto me ? What is the Birth-day but the day of grace through Thy sanctifying, ever-progressing, all-comprehending gift of life ? Thus only the day becomes sacred ; and the increasing sense of its sacredness alone renders it into a day marking the recurrence and the repetition, the re-announcement and the reassurance, of Thy love and grace. Need I be urged and invited, need I be exhorted and inspired, by suggestions from without, gracious and generous though they be, to turn unto Thee and say, ' Thou art my own, my individual, my special God ' ? Nay ; were the whole world rolled up into nothingness, Thou would'st still be my God even for the gift of life—

*Closing prayer after *Ushakeerthan* on Seventy-Sixth Birth-day at Pithapuram (2-10-'38).

However brief, however incomplete, however abused,
 however rendered unworthy, yet Thy gift. For this gift
 I should be Thine for evermore through all changes
 and chances. Oh, my God, my beloved God, the afflu-
 ence of Thy mercy—who can take account of it, who
 can measure it? Hast Thou not spread out the whole
 universe even for this humble creature? While it
 reaches out to myriads, it yet applies itself intensely
 even to this lowly individual—in his own estimate a
 particle of dust, yet in Thine eye a priceless jewel of
 heavenly promise. For the gift of life with all its
 opulence of truth, of wisdom, of grace, of harmony,
 of bliss, of beatitude, I render my allegiance unto Thee
 with all the intensest devotion of my heart. The
 shining stars above and the bracing breezes around,
 the sparkling rills and the echoing groves afar—all
 declare Thee the God of grace. Every nerve, every
 fibre, every drop of blood, every breath of life—all
 proclaim Thee the God of love, of grace-filled good-
 ness, of beneficence rich and hallowed with mercy.
 As Thou art the God of loving-kindness in all its ful-
 ness, Thy gift of life must be rich with all the wealth
 of charity, of purity, of affection, of devotion, of em-
 bracing love and of sanctifying bliss. Every look of
 Thine is a ray of cheering heritage to the world which
 is mine even as I belong unto it—Thy gift which I
 render back in adoring praise unto Thee. Ever near,
 ever dear One! The stars rolling in their eternal
 march and all that is out of sight with nothing but
 these two feet that tell me I am in touch with the
 world—they all bear witness that I am Thine and I

must be Thine for evermore. While the world is absorbed in its own interests and I am left as if I am nobody's concern, the heart within assures me I am yet Thy concern, Thy watch is on me, Thy embrace is around me and Thy arms hold me close unto Thee. Oh, by what designation shall I make known the deep, the profound reverence of my being unto its holy and blissful God? Why tell me that I need to invoke Thee even for one *nimusham*? When art Thou not with me, embracing me? Every moment is aglow and athrill with Thy presence. Blessed be Thy name! This glorious testimony to Thy love has been on the faces and in the hearts of these, my sisters and brothers. That, too, is Thy gift. Thou art my All-in-all, my own in all; so that all is mine in Thee. Who can estimate, who can calculate, who can figure out in reckonings the abundance of Thy mercy? Every blade of grass tells me Thou art Mercy itself. The soft dust under the foot, protecting it from hardness and stiffness, is spread out by Thee with Thy own motherly hand. Thou art the Mother, the Mother in the mother, the Mother of all mothers, the Mother verified in all mothers. Even to utter that dear, that endearing, that holy name, 'Mother, *Janani*'—that is bliss itself. Matters it not whether this be my last Birth-day here below or whether any further expression of grace in terms of time await this humble individual. Beyond all doubt is the fact of Thy mercy. Thou all-cherishing One, how can I tell the richest experience of my heart and soul, speak out my absorbing sense, my overwhelming consciousness, of Thy grace

and Thy goodness ? Blessed, blessed be Thy name ! And even as Thou hast not merely watched over me but overlapped me on all sides these seventy-six years, oh, what other proof, what other argument do I need to tell me that *Thou art my Mother* ? The world may call Thee by a thousand names. But unto me it is adequate to call Thee my *Mother*. And as I utter that holy name, the nectar fills all my being, and I feel the overflow all around. May I with the latest mortal breath be privileged to be sanctified by this thought and this utterance : ‘Blessed be my Mother !’ ! And if Thou hast been so ceaselessly, stintlessly, measurelessly kind and loving and cherishing unto me, ah, how unworthily I have turned away from this supernal vision of Thy presence ! Even as the cloud covereth up the eternal sun, so the mists and the shadows of life with its follies, frivolities and transgressions have kept the Mother’s face veiled from the child. Could anything be more pitiable than that it should be so, even while the Mother’s arms were incessantly around me pressing me close to the Mother’s bosom ? Yet, that has been the tragedy of my life ! Now, may that effulgent, enrapturing face be revealed, never again to be veiled off ! May I see the Mother’s benignant smile and cheering look on all sides ; and, visioning it, enraptured by it, may my whole life prove to be one unbroken psalm of thanks-offering in devout gratefulness !

Bless these dear ones whom Thy love has prompted to tell me that we are dear to Thee — I to them

and they to me in Thee. Bless them, one and all, with the gifts of truth, love and beatitude. How many of these hast Thou not endeared to me as proofs of Thy own mercy and affection! I am truly blessed in this wealth of beloved ones whom Thou hast vouchsafed to me, generation after generation, through all avenues and in all interests. Their whispers, their greetings, their joyous looks, their fraternal embraces, their thousand and one expressions of attachment and devotion — all are Thy gifts unto me, the Heaven-donated assets of my life. For these I glorify Thee. The little one comes near with the lisp of love; and the lofty one beams over with the smile of love. Not merely encircled with Thy love but embosomed in Thy love on all sides, how can I bless Thee sufficiently for these, Thy manifold tokens of living love? May they grow, multiply, amplify by Thy grace so that, as the veil drops and I recede, it may be possible to proclaim, 'Here was one favoured of God, unworthy though of even an iota of His grace'! Such is the mystery of Thy being that unto the dirtiest ones Thy motherly mercy is particularly attentive to cleanse and purify. Thus, as Thou hast enriched me with so many gifts of spiritual comradeship, of domestic affection and all the ties of sweetened love, may it be known and acknowledged of all that are dear to me that I have been Thy fond, favoured one!

This day must be impressive with the sanctified presence of my benignant and gracious Mother. May it be marked and solemnised by that presence! May I

once again be rendered, even by the Mother's grace, perfectly certain that I am my Mother's own darling ! May that gift be vouchsafed throughout this day amid all its expressions of love and regard ! And, every minute manifesting that grace unto me, may this day be rich, abundantly rich, with the felt presence of my own beloved Mother !

Blessed, blessed, blessed be the name of the Mother now and for evermore !

Om ! Brahma Kripahi Kevalam !
Om ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Santhih !
Om ! Harih Om !

II

MANASAMANDIRA—SWARGALAYA*

(1934)

HYMN—*Anandamritha namah* (Sanskrit)

Om ! Anandamritha namah ! Reverent salutations and obeisances unto Him who is *Anandamritha*, the Immortal One in Bliss, the Eternal One in Beatitude !

Anandamritha namah ! Countless in number, profound in sentiment, sanctifying in exhilaration are the inspiring, entrancing emotions evoked by this sacred song, the holy hymn of the morning matin—the dawning, divine incoming with the *ushahkeerthan*. Blessed is the soul that is awakened, after the resuscitating, reinvigorating repose of the night, into the sweet and sanctifying sense of the revivifying and regenerating God ever awake, ever vigilant, ever intimate, ever indwelling, ever illuminating — mysteriously resuming each one into Himself in the serenity of slumber and again restoring each one, as if in a new birth, to the changeless old and yet the ever-changing new world of association and of environment with all its wealth of dear possessions, attractive relations, reciprocal responses, reintegrating affinities, attachments and affections. Blessed be this God who, ever present with, closely interested in, intimately devoted to, every soul,

* After *Ushahkeerthan* (13-8-'34).

is, time and again, working this twofold miracle of resumption and retreat and of restoration and regeneration, thereby conveying the ever-recurring benediction of intimate and unbroken communion with Himself ! We bow to Him with all the reverence of adorers and embrace Him with all the rapture of children ; and we praise and bless and glorify Him that He is our own loving and sanctifying God. Such is the joy, the bliss, of this thrice-happy hour. Behold the vastness of His reach, the intimacy of His touch, the absorbingness of His communion, and the illumination of His self-revelation ! *Manasamandira*, enshrined in the soul, on the one side, and *Sarvopagatha*, all-permeating and all-embracing, on the other ; and the two aspects of this Divine manifestation for ever harmonised, everlastingly integrated, in the Heaven of His own hallowed Being !

Thus is the *Anandamritha* comprised in the *Manasamandira* and the *Swargalaya*. Can man rise to the height of this grandeur, descend into the depth of this profundity, absorb the inexhaustible affluence of this life — life within, life all around and yet one life in *Anandamritham*, the immortal bliss of God Himself ? Such is the benediction He pronounces on this blessed occasion with the divine assurance that His is the temple set up in each mind, in each heart and in each soul : He is the *Manasamandira* ; and each of our spirits is a sanctuary of His. With this revelation we feel so sanctified, rendered so holy ; for thus it is made manifest to us, even to us, that we are the consecrated tabernacles of the Divine Spirit. It is given to us to

chant that holy word, *Manasamandira*, to realise its sweetness and sacredness only as we render ourselves devoutly and unreservedly into His being and thus become so absorbed into His spirit that none of us exists save as the chosen chalice for the nectar of His bliss. And then behold, with awe-filled wonder, the whole universe converging into the God-indwelt soul! When God accepts the soul as His shrine, in that shrine are congregated His adorers all the world over — an all-comprehending confraternity of devotees and worshippers. Such is the surpassing vastness, the incalculable magnitude, of this transcendent conception of *Manasamandira* indwelling the soul — not thereby narrowing it into a cell, but enlarging it till the *anu* becomes the *mahath* and the circumscribed expands into the universal. It is this bliss, this *amritham*, that God, by free grace, deigneth to grant unto each one of us. Blessed One, how intimately related, how inseparably close-knit we are, one and all, with Thee and in Thee! What is this 'me'? An empty shadow without Thee; an enduring reality with Thee! Herein does Thy creation unfold the marvels and the mysteries of Thy grace — that grace which none can escape and none can exhaust. As it comes surging into the soul, that grace divine brings the faith and the joy that, in very truth, we live and move and have our being in Thee — not merely known of Thee, protected by Thee, enwrapped in Thee, but absorbed and resumed into Thee. Blessed be Thy name that Thou vouchsafest to us this priceless blessing, this sanctifying blessing, this truly divine blessing, that Thou art *Manasamandira* and we, even we,

Thy holy temples — our souls the inmost sanctuaries of Thy Spirit ! As Thou art thus enshrined in us, Thou becomest *Swargalaya*. With Thee thus reverently adored, thus rapturously embraced and enjoyed, we dwell in heaven itself, we become immortal in beatitude. We beseech Thee, do Thou enshrine Thyself in us and illumine us with the transfiguring vividness of Thy holy presence, that we may thereby grow eternally into Thee and, with that growth, grow increasingly into one another and thus become Thy family — Thy worshippers adoring Thee and Thy children rejoicing in Thee. Do Thou, in Thy abounding grace, lead us evermore into this truth(*sathyam*), this light (*jyothi*), this bliss (*amritham*), of everlasting life in Thee. This our humble prayer, this our devout supplication, do Thou mercifully grant with all the affluence of wisdom and goodness, holiness and bliss. Blessed, blessed. blessed be Thy name now and for ever !

Om ! Brahma Kripahi Kevalam !
Om ! Santhih, Santhih, Santhih !
Om ! Harih Om !

III
WHAT ART THOU NOT UNTO US?
(1920)

HYMN—*Emani piluthunu ninnu* (Telugu)

As, with longing hearts, we seek to name Thee, we at once become fully aware of the frailty and futility of our attempt. Thought finds itself helpless. Yet the heart yearneth evermore to call Thee by a name, to designate Thee, that so it may rejoice in the search after Thy name as the Author, Mother, Father, Friend, Protector, Teacher, Guide, Saviour and, far above all, the Spouse Divine of the soul. How there springs up an irresistible and spontaneous delight within us even in describing Thee, in calling upon Thee, in exalting Thee, in proclaiming Thee to the world! Thou art truly the Father, Thou art verily the Mother, Thou art really the Friend, Thou art indeed the intimate Companion, Thou art most unmistakably the Saviour of us all—wise as the father, sweet as the mother, so-lacing as the friend, faithful as the companion and regenerating as the saviour. Oh, what art Thou not unto us, dear God?

How in Thy absolute mercy Thou dost descend from the eternal, unsurpassed majesty of Thy being

even into our lowly hearts and our humble homes, not delegating Thy charge to others, not surrendering it to laws, not entrusting it to destiny, but taking personal interest in, and immediate care of, each one of us! How Thou dost tend us; how Thou dost watch over us; how Thou dost foster us; how Thou dost cherish us, one and all! Oh great and glorious God, what are we — what is man, this worm of a moment? Mere dust of the earth, he is yet beset by Thine own self; and Thou lavishest Thy love even upon sinners like me. We behold Thy glory even through Thy mercies so manifold, so varied — multifarious in number and matchless in variety. This marvellous glory is naught but the unfailing expression of Thy wonderful purpose woven into the indescribable beauty of the vast universe so charming to the heart in the richness of life and love.

How rich, how incalculably rich, what a precious, what a priceless treasure life becomes to us as we realise Thy blessings — foremost of all, the blessing of Thy felt presence in all the concerns of existence! The child is no longer a child but the outflowing and offering of Thy love. The mother is no longer a mother but the receptacle of Thy purity. The brother is no longer a brother but Thy fraternal propensity bodied forth in the concrete. The preceptor is no longer a preceptor but the incarnation of Thy gospel. Thus we hail Thee in our all, and we rejoice that unto us belongs Thine eternal heritage of truth and goodness, beauty and righteousness. For all this, how can we

fail, despite all shortcomings, to render our whole-hearted thanks unto Thee? Thou Fountain of incessant, ever-active, ever-watchful, inexhaustible, interminable affection, mercy and compassion, how personal, how intimate, is Thy interest in us! Dear God, how rich is Thy blessing; how poor our appreciation! How immediate is Thy contact; yet how rigid our exclusiveness! Even on the material plane, who can estimate the value of life and light, of air and water? What is there equivalent to the earth? Who may tell what all is meant by the breath of life? Light and the eye, sound and the ear, taste and the tongue — are they not all favoured by Thee as channels of communication with Thyself, direct inspiring links of intercourse with Thyself? What are the senses but so many portals into Thy own audience-chamber? Thou art with us in the awakening moments of the dawn. Thou abidest with us through the round of the day's activities. Thou increasingly enrichest this vast creation for us with the reflection of Thy beauty. Thus Thou claimest us all as pilgrims unto Thy shrine even in the so-called secular engagements of life. And, oh Lord of our hearts, Thou art the presiding genius of our hearts, ruling over our hearts and sanctifying our hearts. Truth is but the sign Thou hast ordained that we should not only dwell in Thee but be resumed into Thee, that we should more and more grow like unto Thee and be returned unto Thee. Oh, how the mystery of Thy mercy baffles all analysis and yet is brought home in the enjoyment of holy grace!

With every fibre of the body, every movement of the limbs, with all the activities of the mind, with every throb of the heart, with the entire dedication of the soul, with the complete surrender of our all, with the unqualified and unreserved offer of devotion and self-consecration, we come to Thee, we bow down to Thee, we give ourselves to Thee. As now we are prompted by the service of the whole universe at the shrine of the Unseen, we join in and take up the song of devout thanksgiving unto Thee and rejoice that even unto us is given this supreme bliss and blessedness of praising Thee and glorifying Thy name.

Oh dear, dear, dear God, do Thou impart unto us, we beseech Thee, just a particle, a little iota, of trustful confidence and self-surrendering, self-realising faith in Thee. Oh, amidst the thick, the oppressive darkness around us in the day of distress, do Thou revive our hope when we are in despair. Grant us Thy fellowship when we are in the terrible isolation of solitude. Do Thou, more and more, inspire in us the confiding trust and the unswerving loyalty of unquestioning devotion unto Thee that through all experiences we may realise that, truly and verily, we are meant for bliss and not for sorrow. Take us, appropriate us, ennoble us. Do Thou so touch our hearts, do Thou so refine our spirits, do Thou so truly purify our desires and purposes, and, above all, do Thou so regenerate our souls that we may live every moment of the day in Thy immediate presence and contact.

This is our humble prayer. Do Thou most mercifully vouchsafe it.

Blessed be Thy name for ever and ever ! Bless all our people ; bless the whole nation ; bless the whole human race ; and bless the whole universe. May Thy truth triumph ; may Thy love prevail ; may Thy righteousness reign with sovereign power ; may Thy glory be fulfilled ; may every heart and every tongue in all ages join the one universal chorus of Thy worship in the harmony of love and service ! Oh Eternal Lord, blessed, blessed, blessed be Thou now and for ever !

Om ! Brahma Kripahi Kevalam !

Om ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Santhih !

Om ! Harih Om !

IV
NAMAKARANAM *
(1923)

HYMN—*Anandavarinidhi* (Telugu)

Om ! Parabrahmane namah ! Where is the occasion for prelude and preparation, for exhortation and encouragement, as we become merged and submerged in the Ocean of *Anandam* ? Speech is hushed and hallowed into the enjoyment of silent rapture ; thought is sweetened and sanctified into the bliss of beatific vision ; and we neither utter the word of prayer nor even chant the hymn of praise ; but the sublime serenity of blissful exaltation and ecstasy fills and overfills our happy spirits. Blessed, blessed be His name ! Where is a fitter occasion for this felt and enjoyed sense of *anandam* than this one, as we hail with a dear name, with an endearing designation, even a golden gift from Him, the God of *Anandam* ? It is not the whim of fancy, it is the vision of spirit, as we feel that we are here not merely in the near presence but in the close embrace of the God of *Anandam*. Such is the ambrosial sweetness of His parental affection. What tongue can measure out the proportions of that

* Of the fourth child of Mr. P. Ramaswamy, M. A., as Santipriya at Cocanada.

affection now drawn in and focussed into this little chamber of a holy home? This is the glory of His love. And as we bless Him for His present love, hope leads us forth into the realm of assurance that He whom we rejoice in as the God of *Anandam* will be the perennial Spring of bliss in the future even as He was the plenary Fountain of life in the past.

Thou Dear One ! These are words often upon our lips in a casual, careless manner ; but really of what tremendous significance, as we apply them to Thee ! How stale and commonplace is ' dear ', and yet how sweet and sanctifying ! Thou art dear unto our hearts — dear for the sake of these whom we hold dear in Thy name. Thou art the Dear One. And as we gather here to realise how intensely sweet that dearness is which Thou dost distil out of the heart and present to the eye as the child in the lap, we will not salute Thee, we will not sing of Thee, but embrace Thee and rejoice in Thee. We are not come together as friends and fellow-worshippers to greet and gratulate but to felicitate and participate in the feast of the spirit as members of a single, undivided family—not to observe a formality, not to label a soul, but with the freshness of love to bless a special gift of Thine with what the world calls a name. And as we bring unto Thy dear feet with freshness of dedication this new gift that Thou alone hast granted us, we talk not the language of courtesy or convention one to another but wish, all together, to hail our child as Thy own gift, Thy very gift, Thy latest gift.

Not once, not twice, but on four distinct occasions hast Thou deigned to come to us with Thy gift in this branch of our family, in this wing of our home. Once Thou didst come all too fresh with Thy gift and awaken in us a pious thought and reflection as to how we should name it ; and Thou Thyself didst inspire us to denote it by the name supreme over all names — that of Truth — as *Satyavathi*. And truly, that first gift of Thine has grown before our eyes and unto the delight of our hearts as a ray of Truth from Thee. Again, Thou didst come and greet us with another gift ; and we besought Thy light as to the name under which to receive it from Thy hand ; and Thou didst say, 'Where *Satyam* is, there must be *Jnanam* beside.' We bowed before Thee ; and Thou didst put it into us to hope that it would grow into a sweet and truly charming plant of Wisdom and spread out into what is *ranjan* to glorify Thee. Once more Thou didst come and whisper, 'Here take this gift and feel its worth'. We turned to Thee and begged of Thee to disclose Thy true intent in such limitless mercy ; and Thou didst signify unto us, 'Where Truth is, where Wisdom flourishes, there Sweetness of Speech must prevail — *Madhuram*, which has its happiest fulfilment and brightest self-realisation as the expression of Harmony.' Now, too, as we have rendered thanks unto Thee for this new gift and, remembering that this felicitous succession of one holy suggestion after another has not been of our own designing, approached Thee, not for counsel — for, that would be unforgivable pride in us — but with a humble, lowly, Prostrate supplication for Thy inspiration as to what

we shall feel on this occasion and how we shall express that feeling, Thou hast said that, even as Truth precedes, Wisdom follows and Sweetness comes in succession, so Peace passing all understanding and baffling all description must be the next approach and ascent unto Thy holy seat. So, with adoring souls and in complete trust and self-surrender, we receive, as the word of Thine own inspiring, this designation for our dear darling. Henceforth, through our *Santipriya*, the enraptured, ecstatic enjoyment of Peace shall represent not merely the consecrated name and the assured hope of one child but the guaranteed hope of the home which is to abide and repose in Thee — the hope warranted by Thine own repeated blessing that we shall be led on still further into the bliss of more and more tokens of Thy grace. And now, bound together by the triple tie of friendship, fellowship and co-pilgrimage, we would bow before Thee and realise ourselves in Thee, the Supreme Lord of Love. Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thou now and for ever !

Om ! Brahma Kripahì Kevalam !
Om ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Santhih !
Om ! Harih ! Om !

V
NAMAKARANAM*
(1930)

Thou the Supreme Deity of the hallowed name, of the endearing name, of the enrapturing name ! Praised and glorified be Thy name ! We have sung that Thy name is sweet beyond human description and human expression. But it is a name not only rich in sweetness but rich with a richness past calculation in beauty and blessing. It is Thee as the Lord of countless blessings, blessings unforeseen and unanticipated, not only not merited but not even conceived of in the most rapturous moment of expectation, it is Thee as the Bestower of a myriad blessings upon even the humblest and lowliest of Thy children that I would praise and glorify on this occasion. My whole life-history is a chronicle of Thine unsolicited and altogether invaluable blessings. None knows, none can know, the abundance of the wealth of mercy that Thou hast vouchsafed even unto this sinner. From birth onwards, the whole story has been replete and redolent with the abundance and the attraction, the captivating charm, of Thy mercy. If Thy mercy did not watch and guide every day of my life, where should I be, what should I be and who should hear of me ?

*Of Venkata Ratnam, son of Mr. S. Seshagiri Rao, B.A., B.L., and foster-child, Dr. Vimaladevi, at Pithapuram (I-10-'30).

From the obscure, neglected, utterly and absolutely unpromising, Thou hast drawn out, as the gift and expression of Thy mercy, a life which, so terribly weighted with frailties and shortcomings, can nevertheless speak with convincing authority of Thy boundless mercy. Thou *art* the God of mercy ; and of the reminiscences and realities of this day, who knows the significance except this grateful one who feels the mystery and the miracle of Thy dispensation even in a worthless life ? Apparently blasted in the fulness of promise, condemned to be homeless and cheerless with what appeared to be the burden of a motherless child, seemingly laid low upon the ground — this life Thou didst uplift, comfort and cheer. Unto it Thou didst make the covenant, ‘Homeless thou shalt not be.’ Home — that heaven upon earth, that present paradise — they said and I felt, was ruthlessly denied to me. Yet Thou didst say Thou wouldst vouchsafe to me a home, not as the world fancies, but as Love sets it up, as the God of mercy rears it out of the free and unmerited grace of His own blessed spirit. Just on the eve of the season when it looked as though the single, solitary token of a home was to be shifted away and I should be left in the dreariness of a companionless life, Thou didst say, ‘Let that one, in the ordained course of Providence, be translated to another home ; yet thy home shall be full of those who make the living shrine and oracle of Divine mercy.’ There they came, all in a manner unanticipated, to make the house a home for me — not to multiply my cares and crosses but to amplify my hopes and aspirations.

Blessed One, as I recall the day when this child, the youngest of the younglings, would cling to my bosom and whisper her message of love into my ear, how gratifying and richly reminiscent of gratitude is that day now to my mind and heart ! And then, how Thou didst procure facilities for their upbringing ! He the homeless, the solitary — how could he foster children ? Yet 'home' was found, fostering care provided and motherly tenderness supplied. Others came, too, and multiplied the trust in Thee, the assurance about Thee and the dependence upon Thee, rendering unto Thee the responsibilities of the home. Thus they grew in Thy home and by Thy grace, howsoever my own imperfections conflicted at every point with their claims and my obligations. When I think of that day and of this — that day of surprise, of unrealised and therefore unthanked-for blessings, and this day of joy, of realised and hence thanked-for benedictions — oh, how my heart fills with gratitude unto Thee ! How the world reverses the estimate and credits unto me so much of goodness and tender affection, parental attachment and what not ! But in bare fact and simple truth, how much I have received and for how much I stand indebted through these blessings of Thine ! How the heart that was in decay has been refreshed ; how the hope that was low has been uplifted ; how the confidence in God that was slender has been strengthened ; how the insight into the human heart and soul that was so limited has been amplified ! These all have been Thy gifts to me. And now it is a challenge to the world to decide whether the bond of flesh or the silken

tie of love is the stronger ; it is an invitation to the world to know that not through the processes of natural fecundity but through the graces of spiritual fertility does man grow into the family of God. The first miracle of that day has, in divers ways, been found repeated and revived in the life of this humble, lowly wight through these dear children. To call them children and kin might be well and good in the common parlance of the work-a-day world. But in the account of the spirit, the blessing of it unto me is too rich with Thy grace to be assessed by man. For this I render whole-hearted thanks unto Thee. Surprise following surprise, unknown to me and ununderstood by me, Thou didst send out heart to draw in heart ; and while the world also remained staggering and ignorant in unconcern, heart flowed into heart ; and under the vow taken before Thy altar, each merged in the other. Then came a second surprise—that of the little, unknown one being drawn unto the eager heart of a bereaved one ; and the two blended into the union of wedlock. The world said it was out of the way and could not bring the usual harvest of love and happiness. But Thou didst justify Thy own ways to doubting hearts and prove that a genuine home might be built up against human misgivings. To repeat Thy miracle of mercy, Thou didst bring this new seraphic harbinger of grace, and that through what appalling incidents ! It looked as if it was to be nipped before it could bud forth and as if the expectations of months were to be blasted in a single day. But Thou didst bring it home to me how not for me alone existed the responsibility but for Thee

also and how it had been in operation through untold ages, all the skill and ingenuity of men having been employed for generations after generations to demonstrate the truth that Thine was unfailing love and mercy. And oh, how Thy providence disclosed itself even in the entrance into this world of the dear little one now to be named in Thy presence ! How he came trembling between being and not being, the mother herself brought to the verge of collapse, and yet hour after hour both receiving refreshing strength and restoring hope ! And here we are today to tell Thee the tale of gratefulness — from one to two and from two to three, and Thou alone knowest what further multiplication. We stand in Thy presence with all the sanctifying sensations of awe, thankfulness and holiness. Blessed be Thy name !

As to the name to be given to this precious darling, gracious is the spirit prompting it, and blessed art Thou that hast sanctioned it. May all the wealth of mercy showered on me be extended unto him ! May all the imperfections and frailties associated with this name be spared and kept out from him ! Rich with Thy blessing and safe and secure in Thy protection from the shortcomings and blunders of the life of him whose name he is to bear, may he grow into a perfect orb of Thy providential protection ! I bow before Thee again and again with the full sense and the sacred weight of gratitude for all the blessings vouchsafed. Pardon the faithlessness and impatience which, time and again, has said, 'Why this, why that?' Yet the past in which Thou

didst sustain the feeble heart in anxiety and apprehension is the guarantee of hope for the future. In Thy love, under Thy guidance, all will be happy. 'On this day of renewed trust and assurance, may I feel blessed once again in that Thou hast been so precious, so merciful, all along! May each one grow nearer, dearer and sweeter to me unto the sanctification and salvation of my soul, as he or she grows to be Thy servant! My heart is still hungering for more, yet more, of the objects of tender love. My God, grant me that gratification. Those that have come — be they the pride of my being, as they are the gems of my heart! Grant a like blessing unto all the children here and elsewhere as designed by Thee to be trustees of the little, enduring worth inherent in the life of any one amongst ourselves! May they enrich the bequest with the worth of their lives lived under Thy guidance and unto Thy glory! Blessed be Thy name now and for ever!

Om ! Brahma Kripahi Kevalam !
Om ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Santhih !
Om ! Harih Om !

VI
THE PARADOX OF GRACE DIVINE
(1924)

There is many a paradox in human life, as every one that cares to look attentively at it must soon become aware. One such paradox, at once perplexing and pleasing, is this — that while those around rejoice, he over whom they rejoice keeps weeping. This phenomenon, poet Saadi applies specifically to man's entrance upon the stage of the world and his exit from it. When you came into being, you came weeping while all around stood laughing. When you pass away laughing, all will stand by weeping. And the paradox illustrates itself not only at the last and closing scene but through many other passages of life. While so many good, flattering things are being said around about him, the man of the sensitive heart inwardly feels lacerated all the time as if placed upon the very rack of torture. Why? Even because of an overwhelming sense of kindness all too unmerited. And the supreme paradox of life is reached when this paradox of mutual relations and sentiments rightly intensifies itself in deepfelt experience and emotion concerning the real bond of relationship between God and the soul. We have a beautiful little bit of imaginary conversation between the Deity and His devotee on the mystic plane. God says,

‘ Shall I disclose to the world your hidden sins which lie all bare before My eye ? ’ ‘ Oh yes ; Thou mayst. And for my part, I will disclose Thine also. ’ ‘ But what is there in Me to expose at all ? Am I not the Perfect One ? ’ ‘ Why, Thou art ever given to pursuing and pardoning the worst of sinners never so reprobate. *That* is the persistent weakness in Thee’. Such, indeed, is the paradox of the Spirit. The grace of God, according to universal testimony, is found most abounding where it is least deserved. Nay, where deserved, it ceases to be grace at all and degenerates into a mere bartering transaction as in the markets of men.

VII
THE LORD'S OWN TESTIMONY
TO HIS HOLINESS*
(1938)

The Lord has given ; and the Lord has taken away : blessed be the name of the Lord ! The Lord has sent forth ; and the Lord has called back : glory be unto the name of the Lord ! The Lord has designed ; and the Lord has completed ; praised be the name of the Lord !

He it is that is eternally and everlastingly revealing Himself as the Lord of holiness—that holiness which is love sanctified, wisdom rendered radiant, and truth indelibly, ineradicably established. He is the All-holy Lord. Blessed be His name !

Of all the expressions and evidences of His holiness unto us, His frail, erring and feebly walking children, the supremest testimony is the holiness of purity in the human heart, that purity which clothes the whole universe with the sweetness and fragrance of genuine and endless joy. Holy, holy is the Lord ; and

*Closing benediction at the *Adyasraddha* of the late Kandula Veera Subrahmanyam Naidu garu at Samalkot (20-2-'38).

hence would He see His holy kingdom established upon earth—even the kingdom of righteousness. In that kingdom would He behold gathered all that are pure in heart, true in speech and loving in conduct.

Blessed be the Lord who has disclosed unto us in our day so striking and impressive an instance of pure-hearted life ! Here is the marvel and miracle of Grace that, coming of a community imagined and supposed even on high authority to be assigned to a life of self-indulgent prurience, our dear departed brother has bequeathed unto us such an arresting example of pure life — a life not merely pure in itself but stretching and spreading in all directions the sanctifying influence of purity. Called away from before the seeing eye but for ever visualised in the loving heart, our brother shall shine forth a living example of the doings of the God of purity in upholding and exalting a grace celestial which dwells not merely in word and look but throughout the entire area of feeling and sentiment. For this great instance He has vouchsafed unto us of His own nature reflected, we praise and glorify the Lord God of holiness at this solemn moment. If to be pure is to be near to God, how closer still to the All-holy One must be the soul that spreads forth the radiance of purity even over a wide-extended sphere ! Such the life lived in our midst, rendering itself abundantly beneficent unto all that came into contact with it. For this blessing we renew our whole-hearted thanks unto the Ordainer of all destinies. To hunger and thirst for the spread and growth of purity, to call

out even from the inmost recesses of the world-enveloped soul the radiance of a loyal devotion to purity—this is the noble message delivered and the inspiring example exhibited by the brother whose departure we may, for the time being, mourn with the frailty of the human heart but the heritage of whose life we shall henceforth treasure up the more dearly in the daily round of existence. We bless the Lord again and again that He has thus vouchsafed unto us the fellowship of a soul so gentle and unassuming, so eager to serve yet so self-subdued—altogether a noble pattern to show how to win through the soft touch of affection and by the sole attraction of a faithful life. How can we adequately bless the Lord for granting unto us in our day this disclosure of His own holy doings in the lives of men?

Unto us who have been ordained to see our brother's departure from our midst, there comes even now and here the strong and impressive appeal to strive always and in all directions to sustain and advance the good work of God he so made his own in life. His kith and kin, the circle of his friends, the company of his associates and admirers—may they all receive in reverent and faithful trust this gift of a good life lived under the eye of the All-holy! May its benevolent influence endure from generation to generation! And, for many a day and decade to come, may those that follow in his footsteps live lives dedicated to purity, illustrate through loyal and loving adherence to his lofty principles how he has not lived in vain

and how they have not been brought into touch with his spirit to no purpose but have been truly blessed in and by that very association! So may his life ever remain for one and all of us, fellow-mourners, rich in the heritage of grace even for the glory of God! Blessed, blessed, blessed be the name of the Lord God of purity and holiness now and for evermore!

Om ! Brahma Kripahi Kevalam !

VIII
THOU ART
(1915)

How can we realise Thee ? What know we of the limitless expanse; the bottomless profundity, the endless immensity, the ever-unfolding eternity of Thy being ? How can we call Thee by any name, designate Thee by any epithet, transcribe Thee by any sketch or reproduce Thee by any symbol ?

Thou art the great Truth, as Thou art the great Contradiction. Thou art the great Reality, as Thou art the great Enigma. Thou art the absolute Fact, the everlasting Substance, the very innermost Essence, of Truth. In all our daily doings and hourly experiences, through every minute and every second, Thou art our sustenance and strength, the ever-abiding spark of vital life in us. Thou art the quickening throb, the silent whisper, of conscience behind every righteous awakening in us. Thou art the source and security of every tender affection flowing forth in widening, deepening streams from within our elemental nature. The mists of our own ignorance, the veils of our own imaginings, the trenches of our own persuasions, the fortifications of our own usages, the quarries of our own passions, the burrowing-holes of our own iniquities—it is these that keep Thee at a distance from us. Yet Thou art

evermore our God ; Thou art my God ; Thou art the God of even the vilest of sinners. Aye, whose God art Thou not ? As Thou hast condescended to come down into me, from whom else wilt Thou stand aloof ? As Thou hast deigned to seize my heart, unto whose heart beside wilt Thou not have access ? As Thou hast not disdained to enshrine my care-perforated soul, what other soul wilt Thou not be pleased to accept as Thy throne hereafter ? Do Thou, then, infuse Thyself into each one of us and reclaim us, one and all, into the cheering and enlivening heaven of intimate personal communion with Thee as the sole Originator, Sustainer and Fulfiller of life from whom we proceed, in whom we grow and unto whom we tend. Be Thou unto us not merely the God of report, of hearsay, of inference, but the immediate God of personal experience in the interminglings of direct intercourse through the varying hours of shine and shower. So shall we bear in mind Thy countless mercies and say, 'Yes ; Thou art, and art the all-compassionate One.' Even now, this very moment, the struggling mind, the throbbing heart, the quaking tongue would gladly voice forth the silent song, 'Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thy name !'

IX
UNTO OUR LORD
(1915)

Unto our Lord, the Lord of our whole being, the Lord of all our doings, the Lord of all our havings, the Lord of all our hopes, the Lord of all our trusts, the Lord of our eternal outlook, the Lord of our immortal life — unto Him we render our thanks and salutations. Transcending philosophy but available to faith and amenable to love, outreaching speculation yet brought into intimacy through communion, He is our own loving and beloved Lord, the Life of our lives and the Soul of our souls. Here we are to seek Him that we may reach Him, seek Him that we may adore Him, seek Him that we may embrace Him, seek Him that we may repose in Him, seek Him that we may be remoulded by Him and seek Him that we may secure our eternal bliss from Him. Blessed blessed, be our Lord!

Majestic with a glory that eye cannot gaze upon or mind conceive to itself, yet sweet with a sweetness, a tenderness and an affection that are in compelling evidence every moment, He alone reigns as the Sovereign to whom all homage is due and reports Himself as the Parent whom all human beings are created to love and revere with the fullest fervour of heart and soul.

Let us bow before Him as our awesome Lord. Let us stand in His presence as our ever-benevolent, ever-gracious Friend. Let us cleave to Him as our only Hold and our sole Strength. Aye, let us dare to climb up to His parental lap even in virtue of our birth-right to His divine grace and heavenly compassion. Him let us perceive without in the vastness of creation, in the teeming immensity of space, in the crowded infinity of time. And Him let us behold within in the expanse of thought, in the flight of imagination, in the profundity of wisdom, in the sweetness of love, in the sanctity of holiness, in the immediacy of communion. Him shall we seek and Him find—now as the Monarch that rules and reigns, now as the Teacher that guides and instructs, now as the Friend that advises and sympathises, now as the Parent that fosters and cherishes, now as the Saviour that sanctifies and regenerates, and finally as the Peace-giver that bestows the unsearchable riches of immortality. Him are we gathered together to adore with the simplicity of the child, with the trust of the disciple, with the hope of the suppliant and with the joy of the devotee. His mercy, His grace, His benevolence, His providential solicitude — how, where, are these so luminously illustrated and so convincingly brought home as even in such blessed opportunities vouchsafed to us of commingling in His name to wait upon Him and receive inspiration from Him through the solemn ministrations of worship—worship not as a dreary duty owed to the Worshipped, not even as a health-giving exercise for the greater strength of the worshipper, but quite out of the

instinctive longing of the child to return to its parent again and again and enjoy ever so repeatedly the sweet felicity of that reunion ?

May the Lord God deign to confer upon us this inexhaustible love, this unspeakable joy, this indescribable peace, this immeasurable hope—these precious possessions that can come only from Him ! Blessed, blessed, blessed be He, the Lord of lords !

X
ANANDAROOPAM
(1916)

Praise and salutations unto Him, the *Anandaroopam* whom we desire to approach, whom we seek to reach, whom we long to pray unto, whom we rejoice to glorify as our own Father, Friend and Saviour ! Blessed for ever be this *Anandaroopam*, the Being of Bliss, the Lord of Beatitude ! We praise Him and we glorify Him with devout hearts and offer Him our grateful thanks that He has brought us together on this happy, this cheering morning. As in the darkest hour of night there lies the hidden promise of the coming dawn, so in the midst of the heaviest despondency there dwells the welcome augury, the sure foreshadowing, of the peace of radiant hope. Thus He in whom we abide and who alone is our everlasting and absolute Lord, He is the Master of triumphs as He is the Moulder of destinies ; He is the Saviour of souls as He is the Ruler of nations. He is the certain Guarantee, the unfailing Perfection, of Truth, of Goodness and of Righteousness. He vouchsafes sustenance to the body and nourishment to the mind. He provides for one and all with more than the bountifulness of a benefactor, with more than the watchfulness of a parent, with more than the graciousness of a saviour. He is the Master of masters, the Sovereign over sovereigns, the supreme Lord and the

undisputed Monarch of the universe. He is the everlasting, the sole-pervading, the all-ministering God. He is the God of our adoration: He is the Deity whom we should worship. He is the Master whom we should serve. He is the Parent whom we should honour and love. He is the Preceptor whom we should assimilate. He is the Saviour whom we should magnify.

We praise Him, we glorify Him, that even unto us, negligible little moths in the vastness of creation, He has granted the privilege, the joy, of turning to Him, of speaking to Him, of entering into the closest association and the most intimate confidence with His Spirit.

Our own beloved God, our Father, our Friend, our Protector, our Saviour ! Thou art our All-in-all — the Truth that endures, the Wisdom that directs, the Power that controls, the Love that cherishes, the Peace that harmonises, the Grace that forgives and the Holiness that regenerates. Thou alone art the purposeful beginning, Thou alone the prolonged progress, and Thou alone the finished glory of our lives. Emerging out of Thee, growing in Thee and sanctified by Thee, each one of us feels ever afresh the *anandam* of Thy *Anandaroopam*. Thou art the Father that taketh care, the Mother that bestoweth the very substance and strength of her own being, as Thou art also the Friend that for ever granteth companionship and the Saviour before whom sin has no power. In Thee as *Anandaroopam* we enjoy bliss for ever, as we are pre-ordained for nothing short of Thy

bliss. Why, even in the world around, the gentle breeze bloweth not, the tender creeper moveth not, the little worm crawleth not, the soaring bird carolleth not, but as an expression of the all-impelling *anandam* of Thy *Anandaroopam*.

We render thanks unto Thee for the myriad blessings of body, mind and soul that are ours in Thee — blessings so abundantly scattered all through this vast universe and associated with, and inwoven into, our humblest concerns. We acknowledge with gratefulness the strength, the wisdom, the joy of the inspiration that comes of Thee to every well-directed life and the heavenly hope that streams in through every struggling endeavour in the varied engagements of this world.

XI
FATHER OF MERCIES
(1915)

Father of mercies ! Unto Thee do we lay bare our humble, our penitent, our prayerful, our expectant hearts. Thee alone do we approach with fervent salutations, with devout prostrations, with reverent obeisances. Thee alone do we approach with the longings of the child for the parent, even as Thou art the Father and Mother of the whole universe—the care-taking Providence, the fostering Protection, the guiding Wisdom, the saving Grace, the enrapturing Love, the sanctifying Holiness of our being.

From Thee the universe has originated. Literally and really, Thou art the very Substance, the abiding Reality, the unshakeable Foundation, the immutable Order, the all-swaying Might, the all-sustaining Vitality, the all-overflowing Energy, the all-cherishing Love manifest throughout creation. Thou art ever the immediate Author, the direct Producer, the perpetual Source and Spring of our whole existence. The countless orbs, the myriad globes—those wandering wayfarers in the immensity of space—they bear witness to Thee as true pilgrims charged with the message of concordant harmony among Thy attributes of power, wisdom and goodness. Their unerring courses ethy sustain only through Thy sleepless vigilance in

personal attention. And, down below, Thou art present in us and with us—in every throb of the heart, in every pulse of life, in every wink of the eye, in the enfolding arm of the atmosphere, in the penetrating ray of light, in the refreshing draught of water. Thou art back of all the varied engagements and experiences of our momentary existence. Thou art the very Rock on which our life is founded. Thou art the sanctifying Force and Strength holding together all our days and our daily doings. Thou art the sheltering Protection under which we seek refuge and in which we find asylum. Thou art the Home of peace, the All-life, the All-sanctity, in which we dwell here below and are to dwell hereafter. Thou art the good Lord by whose voice we are directed in our labours and through whose ordinances we are enabled increasingly to realise the best and noblest in our nature. Thou art the Spirit enshrined in our souls where we behold Thee in Thy speckless purity and fadeless effulgence. In our puzzling situations, Thou art our assuring Hope. In our withering ailments, Thou art our tender Nurse. In our anguishing afflictions, Thou art our soothing Balm. Thus Thou art unto us not merely the Father that protects, the Mother that nourishes, the Friend that sympathises; but Thou art truly and verily the Beloved from whom we receive our all and unto whom we are to render our all. Thou art eternally so concerned for us that, not shutting Thyself up behind the veil of mystery, not looking down from the ascendancy of majesty, not keeping far away from our unregenerate spirits, Thou dost enter into our inmost recesses

as the God of each one of us. Unto the erring, Thou art the revealing God. Unto the fear-stricken, Thou art the cheering God. Unto the lowly, Thou art the uplifting God. Unto the sorrowful, Thou art the comforting God. Unto the silent, Thou art the communing God. Unto the philosophic-minded, Thou art the profound God. Unto the darkness-enveloped, Thou art the illumining God. Unto the passionate, Thou art the pacifying God. Altogether, Thou art the all-adorable God.

And now, as we adore Thee, as we sit at Thy feet and realise fellowship and enjoy communion with Thee, we render grateful thanks unto Thee even for all the sorrows that we have known as the veriest messengers of Thy grace in disguise. For, as pressure brings out the most hidden resources of energy and the squeezing machine draws forth jets of the sweetest juice, even so Thou usest the weight of tribulation at times to evoke the rich possibilities of our estate. And our joys— we glorify Thee, for them all as well. For, what are they if not tokens of Thine own inherent bliss which Thou wouldst freely share with us in constant participation? Furthermore, from the depths of our hearts, we bless Thee for all the glimpses of Divine glory disclosed through those elect ones whom, in Thy providence, Thou hast set up from time to time in all ages and lands as the spokesmen of Thy gospel of truth, goodness and beauty. Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thy name now and for ever !

XII
CONGREGATIONAL
(1915)

Unto Thee, Thou God of love, Thou God of bliss, we tender our devout salutations, our reverent prostrations. We thank Thee with grateful hearts that once again Thou hast led our steps to this dear spot consecrated with the sanctity of Thy worship and with all the high and holy hopes generated, in the seeking heart and adoring soul, by the glowing and loving faith which eternally flows into every suppliant spirit. Thou eternally endearing God of truth and wisdom, love and righteousness, we praise Thee that Thou hast once again brought us here together to lay our united tribute of adoration at the august footstool of Thy supreme throne and to render unto Thee our devoutest thanks that Thou hast kept us safe in Thy keeping even according to Thy benevolent purpose and Thy holy will. We would once again realise Thee as our Father, Friend and Saviour. We would speak unto Thee with the freedom and confidence that evermore fills the hearts of little children. We are here, brought together into one shrine, united together in one congregation, bound together even as one fraternity of devout worshippers. As we are here to worship Thee together, we realise Thee as our common Parent, our hearts interlinked in sweet harmony and our souls intertwined in sacred

fellowship. Do Thou sanctify us with Thy holy presence and bless us with Thy abundant mercy.

Om! Thath Sath !

XIII
THE MOTHER'S LAP
(1915)

Keshub taught that we should always feel as if on the Mother's lap and then we would know no want. Yes. In a railway train numberless people travel ; and different persons command different comforts, because there is the first class, there is the second class, there is the inter class and there is the third class. But if there is a baby travelling in the train, it does not mind in the least which class it is travelling ; for it is comfortably laid or seated on the mother's lap. Similarly, in the great journey of life, if we but feel that we are on the Mother's lap, what care we for aught else ?

XIV
CHILD AND PARENT
(1915)

The child is verily the guarantee of the parent's life after death — the rectification of the parent's mistakes, the realisation of the parent's desires and the fulfilment of the parent's hopes. It is, as it were, the very top-storey of an edifice in the making, the concluding harmony only the opening strains of which are heard in the parent. While the father is only the custodian that has expended the legacy left with him, the child is the treasury in which a person deposits the best and the noblest in all his life. Love flows down in fuller torrents towards the child than it ascends towards the parent. The future is much more of a radiant vision than the past is of a realised possession.

XV
EVER A SUCKLING
(1915)

Sucking the juice from a mango, a certain boy said that he was sucking it just as his little sister sucked milk from their mother's breast. How significant! Every moment of our lives, we all suck, likewise, from the Divine Mother's bosom.

XVI
THE CRUCIAL TEST
(1915)

There was a mother, and there was her daughter. The daughter fell seriously ill. And the mother began to pray God and His angels to take her own life instead and save the daughter. One night, a goat suddenly entered the house and thrust her head into a pot to eat the contents. But she could not take back her head from it. Not knowing what to do, she groped in the dark this way and that, and by chance entered the room in which lay the mother. The latter at once thought that that was one of the spirits of the infernal regions—a spirit with four legs and no head but a huge, black, round thing in its place—come over to take her away. And forthwith she spoke out to the visitant, ‘The person whom you have come to take away is in the next room,’ meaning her own daughter!

XVII
TRUE FAITH
(1915)

Not to be merely well grounded in the formulae of faith but to be effectively inspired by the spirit of faith—that is what is essential to religious life. He who toils, he who drudges, he who drives the plough or wields the weapon, may, after all, be truly as religious as he who cons the scriptures or counts the beads, sings the hymn of praise or utters the word of prayer. Any occupation followed in the right spirit of undimmed trust in God and with the living consciousness of ultimate accountability to God, is as religious as any directly religious exercise or engagement, so called, can be. The latter, sometimes, is worth nothing more than mere dust, if it does not prove a positive snare. It is empty, if not delusive ; pretentious, if not injurious.

XVIII
WHERE IS GOD ?
(1915)

" Says the teacher, 'I'll give you an orange if you can tell me where God is'. But answers the student, ' Beg your pardon, sir, I'll give you two oranges if you can tell me where God is not.'

XIX
ERRING YET HOPEFUL
(1915)

In the eyes of the clergy, the serf and the lord might stand on the same common level, not necessarily of sinful humanity, but of erring humanity, yet, at the same time, as all advanced religionists would say, of hopeful humanity. Without losing sight of the frailties of a man, we should estimate him not by the blunders he makes but by the promise he shows, by the instruction he receives and by the wisdom he cultivates. By all means, tell him not that he is so sinful, but teach him that he can be so good. Learn to see in every man not the blundering creature that he is but the wise savant that he can be. Out of the secret failings of the sinner, pry out his possibilities, and ask him to pluck a stout heart to walk more steadily and to live more uprightly. If you terrify him with the tale of his sins and condemn him as a vile worm, you only make him, after all, a listless, trembling creature who makes a faint effort with a distressed sigh but soon breaks down. Let him understand that there is hope for him in Heaven, grace for him in the bosom of God, that his lot is not to quake and quail before the thunders of an offended Deity but to turn in penitent supplication and trustful confidence to a forgiving and redeeming Father whose judgments are ever clement and whose

purposes are ever benevolent, who chastises only to chasten and afflicts only to strengthen. Thus the man shall learn that God is righteous, not to condemn, but to save. The Saviour is the Healer. As the face is thus set Godward, the soul shall feel after God and be reborn in the Holy-Spirit. Is not this the true significance of the amputated Sarangadhara healed and rendered whole as his gaze is fixed on a radiant orb ?

XX
PROVIDENTIAL ARRANGEMENT
(1915)

If it is a providential arrangement that light^{er} bodies should come up to the surface and cold bodies should be heavy and therefore go down to the bottom, is it not also an equally providential arrangement, though an apparent violation of rule, that ice should float upon water? If it is providential that sandy deserts should operate as regulators of the earth's temperature, is it not likewise providential that out of the dreary heart of the howling wilderness, there should spring up trees which for the mere tapping yield ever so many pints of crystal water? If it is providential that there should emerge emerald isles in the midst of trackless oceans, is it less providential that there should bloom forth smiling oases from out of the arid bosoms of desolate wastes? And then, what clear marks of a like providential arrangement, what distinct proofs of a similar divine adaptation, in the structure and instincts, in the ways and habits, of animals! In themselves non-rational in the accepted sense of the word, they yet disclose various striking instances of the aptest adaptation between form and function, between self and surroundings, together with the marvellous instinct of provision for the future. Such facts of observation and such features of experience, innumerable as they are

throughout creation—do they not argue a providential background, a divine element, in so fitting them up and shaping them out ? And lastly, to fasten attention on but one aspect of man's wondrous ways, how remarkably he participates in the providence of the Creator when he contributes to the propagation of the race ! Here, in very truth, is the nearest approximation to and the closest imitation of, the providence of God.

XXI
THE SPIRIT OF COMPLAINT
(1915)

As the worst workmen are usually the readiest to strike, so the least industrious members of society are the loudest to complain. The most useless wheel of all is the one that creaks. We are too prone to take some cherished misery to our bosom and pet it there. Happily, however, the human mind is so constituted that it resists rigour and yet yields to softness.

XXII
NATURAL INEQUALITY
(1915)

“So far is it from being true that men are naturally equal that no two people can be half an hour together but one shall acquire an evident superiority over the other.”—*Johnson*

I wonder, in what respect. True, myself and my coachman cannot be together for five minutes without his acquiring superiority over me in driving the coach. Again, here we are in the class-room together. And I am now your superior. But if we walk a hundred yards into the playground, in a couple of minutes you acquire superiority over me. In aptitudes, in social surroundings, in opportunities for culture, there will be differences. That nobody denies. But when people claim equality of position, certainly they mean equality of opportunity and equality of appreciation. Here are two separate cases of ‘drivers’ of the same description: of the same engine, on the same line, between the same stations and of the same kind of trains (mail, passenger or goods). But why should one of them be paid Rs. 90 and the other only Rs. 50, except that the former has a shade of fairer complexion than the latter? This was what humorously passed once between two friends of mine. One said, ‘You say I am weaker

than you. Come along, then, and let us walk. I do two miles daily'. And that was when he went round on his 'tuitions'! The other retorted, 'At that rate, Mrs. So-and-so is superior to you, because for half-an-hour she is daily bending and sweeping, which you cannot do.'

In the economy of humanity, every individual is a factor to be reckoned with and appreciated. When you say that some are born to suffer while others are born to enjoy, that some are born to ride while others are born to be ridden over, then man's inner magnanimity revolts against artificial distinctions sought to be palmed off as natural. A certain giant triumphantly said to a dwarf, 'You little man, you can't step into my shoes.' 'Nor can you into mine, sir,' requited the other in kind.

XXIII
THE BUDDHISTIC DISPENSATION
(1915)

In humbling the king, if haughty, and exalting the beggar, however lowly; in nerving the will against the assaults of adversity and urging virtue on to achievement, the Buddhistic Dispensation was quite as inspiring, as powerful and as beneficial as any other organisation has been. In fostering a tender solicitude for human and animal life ; in infusing a lofty enthusiasm for human weal ; in conjuring up, as it were, educational institutions for human enlightenment ; and in revolutionising social aims and ideals for human enlargement, the Buddhistic Dispensation worked miracles that were unsurpassed by any other organisation of that time.

XXIV
ENJOYMENT
(1912)

Enjoy life. Enjoy the enjoyment of seeing others enjoy. Enjoy all that it is your birth-right and privilege to enjoy. Enjoy all that the scientists have discovered, all that the historians have recorded, all that the mathematicians have calculated, all that the poets have sung, all that the prophets have proclaimed and all that the saints have realised. Enjoy Him from whom is the very faculty of enjoyment; enjoy Him who enjoys Himself in you and with you as in all around that stands enveloped by Him ; enjoy Him in the true spirit of renunciation towards whatsoever pertains to others ; enjoy Him even by loving Him with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength.

XXV
THOUGHTS AND LOOKS
(1915)

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It has been shrewdly observed that he looks up
who thinks lofty thoughts and, likewise, he looks down
who thinks sordid thoughts.

XXVI
LIGHT AND MUSIC
(1915)

In the very lustre of the stars there is a melody, a harmony. They dance to the music of the universe and proclaim the glory of the Maker of all. Thus runs the chorus of one of Rabindranath's lyrics.

XXVII
BETTER TO HAVE LOVED AND LOST
(1915)

There is nothing to match with love. It sees farther, surveys broader, serves surer than mere intelligence, interest or aught else. The childless parent is hard as barrenness. The parent that had a little babe and has lost it, is almost as tender as the mother who has a nursling constantly in her arms. For a certainty, this proves it better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all.

XXVIII
INTENTION IN EVIL-DOING
(1915)

“ An alleged want of intention when evil is committed will not be allowed in a court of law .”

—*Johnson*

This is so only in the case of an *alleged* want of intention. But where the want of intention is patent or proved, law does say that offences are, if not wholly condoned, at any rate satisfactorily palliated. A doctor, with the best of intentions and with due care, may happen to kill a patient while treating him. Certainly, he will not be hanged, if it is proved that the method of treatment, though novel, is not rash and his intention not malicious. A certain man is splitting logs; and as he lifts his axe, the steel-head slips off from the wooden handle and falls on one standing by as an idle spectator and hits him at a mortal point. The wood-cutter is surely absolved. Mrs. Tyndall, the wife of the renowned scientist, administered poison to her husband under the belief that it was medicine; and she never knew that she was making a mistake until the poor husband cried out, ‘ Ah dear, you have killed me’. Naturally, she was not hanged. Professor Fawcett, the great Political Economist, went out for partridge-shooting. The party divided into two sets, They went

up in different directions to the top of an elevation. A troop of birds was then passing along. One of the sportsmen discharged his gun. As mischance would have it, the shot went direct to the eyes of the Professor, who thus became blinded for life. But the man was not convicted.

XXIX
IDLE DELIBERATION
(1915)

“Life is not long, and too much of it should not pass in idle deliberation how it shall be spent.”

—Johnson

Man should deliberate. Only, he should not deliberate too long. There was a certain prince who wasted twenty-five years and spent another six months in idly grieving over it and took half-a-dozen years more to form a resolution as to what he should do next. In Johnson's own *Rasselas*, the last chapter is called the concluding chapter ; but in it nothing, indeed, is concluded !

XXX
MORALITY MAKES NATIONS
(1915)

As we scrutinise the histories of nations and examine their interpreters, we seem to find little stress laid by them on the prime principle that morality makes nations. As we follow the story of the development of the American Colonies, the various diplomatic moves in the growth of the Indian Empire or the consolidation of the German Principalities, we are led to suspect that might alone is believed to be right and not the reverse. But the fact remains that, in the proper estimate of it, there can be no might without there being right behind it. With the majority of people, right is only physical, material force as exhibited in the emasculation of a subject race by various measures of repression. All the same, in the memorable words of John Bright, it is righteousness alone that exalteth a nation. A certain native of Switzerland was taunted with the remark that his country abounded in barren rocks that produced nothing. But he retorted that his was a homeland that produced men, liberty-loving men, while other countries produced merchandise! Just as the eye ceases to exercise its function in the absence of light, so even the liberty thus justly boasted of ceases to be a virtue in the absence of that sense of morality which constitutes the one vitalising factor alike in the

emancipation of the nation and in the advancement of the individual. To construct a house, you must put brick upon brick ; but it certainly will not make a house without the binding force of cement between brick and brick.

And of this indispensable element of morality the essence is self-surrender—the consideration, how much I give to the world, not what I want from the world. The moral man is he who adds life and power to the sum-total of the world's stock. According to the Vedic conception of Creation, the *Purusha* imparted Himself, self-divided, into the manifold of phenomena. Likewise, every one is required to make himself a lending factor, not a borrowing factor. As someone has observed, it is remarkable that lending and borrowing exist only among men and not among other kinds of beings in the living kingdom. This institution of lending and borrowing is a sure test of progress as testifying to the growth of moral affinity and fraternity between man and man. Even the well-known Arbuthnot crash of some years back—does it not prove a rare degree of mutual trust in civilised society as the inspiration of the original investments ? Human morality, even like any ordinary house, has three parts—namely, a basis, a super-structure and a covering ; and these are to be found, respectively, in purity, philanthropy and piety. And as to the basal virtue of purity, its practice, like the worship of humanity, is completed, not merely when you reverence the mother, honour the wife and cherish the daughter, but when, for their sake and in their name,

you reverence, honour and cherish the whole of their sex. If the son is the asset you give to the credit of society, the daughter is an outlet you never complain of. That teacher is a sorry specimen of his profession who can, without his heart aching at the same time, bring himself to chastise the tender body of a boy-pupil which the same God has made as his own. Yet, dare you, as a father, chastise your daughter with the same readiness and roughness as you do your son? The normal human heart is the fountain of tender feelings. And if out of the heart are the issues of life and youth is the basis of the whole edifice of life, all basic principles of morality, even those of purity in the vital relations of the sexes, must be grounded in the vigour of youth. Then, of course, on such foundations well and truly laid must rise and rest the completing sections of philanthropy and piety to make up the entire structure of morality, as observed above. And in this fulfilment, the individual ever remains the type of the nation, representing in himself the distilled essence of national righteousness. The nation grows in greatness only in so far as this moral essence in the individual is expanded, the law of moral growth being that of growth from within while all mechanical growth, as in the layers of the rock, is from without.

XXXI
PROTECTION OF THE ABORIGINES
(1915)

“ Not pious, passive horror but genuine, human indignation” — Froude : *English Seamen in the Sixteenth Century*

Spain thought she was grafting a higher civilisation and a nobler religion on the soil of America. The truth, however, was that she was not only denuding America of her wealth but also devastating her ancient civilisation. The result was that the natives were practically being wiped out of the Continent by the unimaginable severity and even tyranny of the Spaniards. And hence the task undertaken by the English sea-men of the sixteenth century came to be to shield the Americans from the fierce ravages of Spain. In this case, England felt the policy was wrong and at once went about the task of opposing it ; so the indignation forthwith translated itself into action. But it is not so always and in all cases. There is just a slight flutter, a little expression of horror and a light indulgence in the weak, watery talk of the ‘protection of the aborigines’. Take, for instance, the instance of Australasia. There, the race of the natives is gradually disappearing from the land, because the white people have pushed them to the most unhealthy parts of the Island

and even begun to introduce among them vices which they never knew before. What with the inclement nature of the climate and what with the destructive influence of such things as strong intoxicating drinks, the natives are gradually being wiped out of existence. And now, a good deal of anxiety is being shown as to how to save them from this annihilation. Here, at any rate, it is all weak, watery talk; for the profession of the lip is belied by the action of the hand. Again, look at the old King of Belgium. How he tormented those poor sons of Congo! He actually mutilated them for the mere reason that they were not able to supply him with the required quantity of rubber. The European nations hotly contend against one another for the possession of a piece of foreign territory. But do they ever condescend to ask its original holders whether they are required there or not? The white man simply goes there and, in the name of his sovereign and his faith, plants his banner on that soil. It is the story of—first, the banner; then, the Bible; and lastly, the bottle! No doubt, a good deal of civilisation is carried into the new countries, and a good deal of beneficial help rendered to their peoples. Nevertheless, Europe has made herself guilty of atrocities for which, without assuming any superiority, we may say she is now paying dearly. The world is not a chaos; but it is under the sway of a supreme Moral Governor who demands tremendous penalties for the enormities of generations. Within the brief span of a single life one may not be able to see it. We enjoy our pastime; we play out our games; we live our day; and, ah, we think it is all

right. But the realisation comes not until the thunder-clap descends on the heads of after-generations sooner or later. Hence they alone are wise who look beyond the horizon of their own day and ask themselves, 'Are we contributing to the weal or to the woe of future generations?' Can cruelty and oppression be forever screened off, forgotten or obliterated from the records of an ever-wakeful Governor of the universe? No; this cannot be. And consequently it is that History has been defined by Carlyle as the true Bible, the true Revelation of the Purpose of God. To take a humorous counterpart, a certain man was beating his wife on a railway platform; a gentleman went up from behind and thrashed the man. 'Why do you beat me?' asked the latter. 'Why do you beat her?' came the counter-query. 'She is my wife.' 'Well, you are my wife for the present.' That is summary law, perhaps; but there is a moral basis beneath it—'As you lift up your arm against that feeble woman, I lift up my strong arm against you; let arbitrators of justice decide whether I am right or not.' There are occasions like this when there arises a righteous throbbing from within; and at once you follow it up with action. Whether it is strictly in conformity with, or in opposition to, the law does not come into consideration. And whether we win or lose is also immaterial. But the blood boils, and the thing must be done. There is a noble-minded father with a widowed daughter in the house whose presence depresses his spirit and makes smooth and happy existence for himself impossible for a single day. He arranges a match and gets her remarried. 'If the *Sastras* denounce it,'

he says, 'sweep them all away — if she is to be condemned to perpetual misery for no fault of hers but because society has trammelled itself with unnatural laws. I care not for man-made *Sastras*, if they press hard as monstrosities. They must care for my daughter, if they are God-given ordinances.' This was the late Mr. G. Subrahmanya Iyer. And there were the Spaniards, with their tall talk about civilisation and faith, going and trampling upon the native Americans as if those were little vermin. And nobly did the English undertake to punish them. This is what General Booth said some time back : Here is a man that has fallen overboard. It is absurd to be arguing whether the fall is by deliberation or by accident. First, let down the life-boat and take him up into it. Afterwards, it will be time enough to investigate how he has managed to fall down. It was not a passing horror but a genuine impulse that moved the mother who found her child on the topmost cliff of a mount of stupendous height, crawled her way up and rescued the child straightway. It is not reasoning, not the calculation of the pros and cons of the issue ; it is the motherly heart that bears her up to perilous, precipitous heights which even the stoutest soldier would fail to ascend. It is true culture that can put such a feeling in you. If, all of a sudden, a man wants to work himself up, it does not become possible. It is the gradual building up of character, the ceaseless formation, inch by inch, of the humanity in you, that will alone equip you to decide on occasion whether or not you should dare and do a thing and take the consequences. So the English people did not view the

outrages of the Spaniards with pious, passive horror; they treated them with genuine, human, practical indignation.

A certain pigeon alights on the eaves of a house. The wife sees it, and then the husband sees it. They both say, 'Poor thing! Poor thing', and quietly make a hearty breakfast of it. 'Poor thing,' because it has alighted on their house! That is all. We have a Hindustani story. There was a pious mendicant — for, all pious people among Hindus and Mahammadans must be mendicants; with them piety and mendicancy are inseparable: the rich man cannot go to Heaven, as the Bible puts it. Well, the mendicant comes home one evening and asks his wife, 'What curry have you prepared?' She says, 'Fowl curry'. 'Fowl curry? Where did you get a fowl from?' 'Our neighbour's fowl stepped into our backyard, and I made short work with it'. 'Aha! All my devotion of twenty years has been contaminated!' The *moulvi sahib* sits for dinner; and because he will not eat the curry, mere rice is served. Then he says, 'Though the fowl is our neighbour's, the condiments must be ours. Is it not so?' 'Yes,' answers the wife. 'Then, give me only the gravy, not the curry'. The wife serves him. He takes a little, relishes it and wants some more. The wife brings in some more, places her hand against the vessel so that the curry may not fall and begins to serve the gravy. 'Why do you place your hand against the vessel?' 'So that the curry may not drop'. Then says the mendicant, 'If it naturally falls from the vessel, it does not matter. So you may remove your hand.' That is just what most

people do. 'If anything *naturally* comes to us, let us take it! Only, we shall not *aggressively* encroach upon others' things.' If a paper comes up of itself without our asking, let us 'copy' it down in the Examination-room! Such, too, on a larger scale is the general policy of territorial acquisition!

XXXII
FROM STATUS TO CONTRACT
(1915)

What is meant in this phrase by 'status'? Manu has said, 'The son, the wife, the slave — these have no independent existence.' In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* there is this story. The father wants the daughter to marry a certain youth. The daughter says, 'No, I don't like him.' And the father says to his daughter, 'You must choose between death and this husband.' Again, what means the customary change in the surname of the wife? It indicates the age-long subordination of woman to man. Likewise, in olden days, as the king's position was hereditary, so was the prime minister's office also hereditary, and so, too, was the village officer's place. There are cases of graduates otherwise employed but continuing to draw their Rs. 5 *per mensem* through their permanent lien upon a *kara-neekam*. On one occasion, myself, a Pillai, a Vaishnavite and a Vaideeki Brahmin went together to a certain house. The last-named was a lawyer. When we were about to leave, we were each given a *thamboolam* and a cocoanut; but for the Vaideeki there was something more underneath the fruit — a four-anna piece. 'So your income this month has increased by four annas?', I said to him. 'No, sir; such tips do come in now and again,' was his reply. Then again, suppose

a parental house is divided between two brothers. One of these has one son ; and the other ten sons. The one son gets one half of the house ; while the other ten sons have to squeeze themselves in the other half. Furthermore, among the Christians, there is, say, a certain man who is good enough to instruct, wise enough to teach, eloquent enough to persuade; but he is not considered sacred enough to get up the pulpit of the ' ordained ' priests. Lastly, do not our Brahmins say, ' He of the unutterable name,' when they have to refer to a Pariah? These are all divers relics of the claims of ' status.'

XXXIII
MERRY OLD ENGLAND *VERSUS* HEAVEN
(1915)

Here is an old story. There was a preacher who used to preach the glory and peace and joy of Heaven. He was on his death-bed. His friends said, 'Oh, you go to that fine place of which you used to speak.' He said, ' But there is no place like merry old England.'

XXXIV
THE GENUINE GENTLEMAN
(1915)

A true gentleman's blood is always pure and blue through untold generations, notwithstanding the vagaries of successive scions. There are poor people, no doubt, under the great disadvantage of poverty but with opportunities to show themselves gentlemen, if not in the broad world, at least in select company. The collier working in the mines with his roughened hand and moistened brow and earning his pittance, returns home after toil and washes, nurses and takes every care of his wife groaning with paralysis. The gleam of her eye proves the grateful affection she has for him. Well, he is God Almighty's own 'gentleman' to whom every one must lift his hat. There are, on the other hand, people in America rolling in wealth yet known only to their parasites who praise them with their mouths only because their empty stomachs are amply fed. Well, these be 'gentlemen' whose pockets are full but whose hearts are empty. A funny story is told of a man who met two people and said, 'Gentlemen, will you please show me the way to the neighbouring village?' And one of them roundly replied, 'I am a logician, and he is a grammarian. So we are no gentlemen.' The haughty son of a Duke who does not scruple to bribe that he may win a certain cause and seduce that

he may satisfy a certain passion, may have the blood of twenty Dukes in his veins; but the brand of the savage lies on his forehead. Make the blackest dog the purest lily-white; but so long as it has the appetite for the carrion, no one will allow it to approach him. Occasions are not few, nor are they passing ones, when I recollect with sadness how I did not behave in this or that dutiful—that is, truly gentlemanly—manner towards my revered masters in my younger days.

APPRECIATIONS
AND
REMINISCENCES

I
RAJAH RAMMOHAN ROY
(1930)

HYMN—*Dinamadi sudinamu gada* (Telugu)

Om ! Truly, it is a *sudinam*, a good day, a happy day, a sanctifying day, on which we dwell upon God as the self-manifesting One in creation, in the human heart, in the history of the race and of the globe. We found our faith on God and the God-like. As we contemplate the God-like, we bring God into our own hearts. This is such a day, truly a good day, a memorable day. We are here this day to contemplate the grace of God as it dwelt in, and made itself a supreme blessing unto all around through, the ever-revered, immortal Rajah Rammohun Roy.

We thank Thee, oh Thou great Dispenser of the destinies of nations, that, all through the ages, Thou hast been dispensing Thy truth and love, righteousness and justice, unto our dear mother-country and that, time and again in unbroken succession, Thou hast been raising witnesses unto Thy Holy Spirit in India, and that, even in these latter days, amidst all the divisions and distractions of so-called modern civilised life

*Presidential remarks at the ninety-seventh death-anniversary celebrations in Fithapuram Town Hall (27-9-'80).

—a life of breathless activity and heedless, hot-haste pursuits—Thou hast more than once revealed the eternal reality and supremacy of the Spirit. For this manifestation of quite a cloud of witnesses we render our whole-hearted thanks unto Thee. On this day, especially, we most devoutly render thanks for the life—the noble, God-inspired life, God-proclaiming life, God-glorifying life— of Rajah Rammohun Roy. Grant unto us, we beseech Thee, the spirit truly to appreciate the worth of this life and enter into the true meaning of the message it was designed to deliver to the world. May we grasp the full significance of his dispensation with clear reference to the critical times when Thou wert pleased to deliver it through him ! And thus realising it, may we learn to value the worth of his message — what it meant when delivered and how it has been verified by successive generations ! May we receive the full benefit of this *sudinam*, memorable as that on which was crowned with final glorification a life devoted always and wholly unto Thy truth and Thy glory ! Bless us ; and be Thou blessed in and through us. Hallowed, hallowed be Thy name !

Om ! That sath !

OPENING REMARKS

Friends,

We are here to celebrate the ninety-seventh anniversary of the death of Rajah Rammohan Roy. The late Justice Ranade, always pregnant in his observations, pointed out the significance of the distinction

commonly made in this country as regards the commemoration time for gods and for great men. With the gods, it is the birth-day, *jayanthi*. With great men, it is the ascension-day, *vardhanthi*. And the reason he indicated for this distinction is a suggestive one. The *jayanthi* observance in regard to a god is the human endeavour to bring the immortal into mortal limits; for when the immortal descends into mortal environment, it becomes a great day. The *vardhanthi* anniversary of a great man, on the other hand, is, so to speak, the summing up of his life; and therefore, it becomes an occasion not only for a reverent and adoring welcome of the immortal spirit but for the expression of the sentiment of profound gratefulness for what God has been pleased to do through it. In the case of the immortal, no verification is necessary, nor is there any need for stock-taking. But in the case of a great man, why and how he became great, and how that greatness was unfolded and manifested all through his days — these are questions which must claim and receive our attention. Very rightly, then, the human soul, with its God-given intention, has devised these various occasions for receiving into itself the benefit of the numerous manifestations of greatness and goodness in man. The anniversary of a great man is, therefore, to be kept with reverent and thoughtful appreciation free from anything of the nature of *a priori* judgment.

One test of greatness lies in the fact that we who judge are so circumscribed and possess such limited

powers that the worth comes into view only gradually. We are not able to take in the whole of the worth at once, while the survey required is too vast for the human understanding. What can be judged and valued within the duration of a decade or two is, in most cases, not of the supremest value. What is of the highest worth comes only by degrees into human vision, like all the marvels of creation tiny in the beginning till they are disclosed in their vast dimensions and we say, 'How vast!' This test applies quite to Rajah Rammo-hun Roy. In his day, no doubt, he was recognised but by no more than a few. Then, he was one to be shunned and treated as lost. But the times have gradually disclosed the inner worth of this prince among men. And now the prevailing estimate has come to be that he was the Father of the Modern Age.

Apart from this general observation, it may be worth our while to dwell upon two or three striking traits in the character of the Rajah. The first point on which I shall dwell is this : the dedicated life he lived. There was no period, as we can understand it, in which he was aimless and lived only a life of the passing day. Grain by grain was amassed of wisdom and the power of critical and appreciative outlook upon the world. All that was most studiously cultivated. Right through from the beginning, his was a life conscious that it had to receive and to deliver a great message. How unsparing he was in preparing himself for this great task ! On the one side, if we pass in review the cyclopaedic learning he acquired year after year, we find that

nothing would be taken on trust : he must judge for himself with his own understanding ; and so he must master by himself Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Hebrew, Greek, Pali — all the languages that contain the main scriptures of the world. Note, too, in this connection how meagre in his day were the facilities and yet how untiring his efforts to get to the rock-bottom of Truth. He must study for himself the repositories of the world's beliefs and judge for himself. And then, on the other side, as to the quest, how remarkable the restlessness of the spirit that would go from place to place to get direct to the fountains of Truth as it was taught and practised—Patna, Moorshidabad, Delhi, Benares and, beyond India, Tibet ! Altogether an amazing soul in quest of Truth, whose one mission was to know, live and propagate Truth ! Wonderful was the dispensation of God in his life. Even when hardly out of his teens, it was given to him clearly to realise that Truth was no monopoly at all of any person, scripture or sect. Study the progress of the thought and life of man, survey human history from China to Peru, and then, notwithstanding all bewildering differences and baffling controversies, you will be led, he declared, to the fundamental truth that while theologies are many, religion is one. That was the first principle he explicitly enunciated even in his very first work, *Tuhfat-ul-murahiddin*, written in Persian with an introduction in Arabic. Whatever the later developments, there was a beauty, a symmetry and a harmony running through his whole career. That was, so to speak, the sheet-anchor of his voyage. He could not deviate from that course.

The Upanishads, the Koran, the Hebrew Testament, the Christian Gospel, the Lives of the great Saints—through all these meandering studies, he kept his eye steadfastly upon Truth. To superficial judgment, it might appear he was all absorbed in the reforming of Hinduism alone. But the sum-total of his life and labours can be rightly grasped only when it is recognised that he strove to minister similarly to other religions as well. Accordingly, he discovered and proclaimed that if one went to the core of any of the world-scriptures, there was one eternal truth which verified itself in all common human experience. The task before him was colossal; and only a gigantic mind could accept the obligation, namely, of the thorough investigation of Truth in a quite other than routine fashion. I have already partly indicated the third trait in Rammohun—that about the object in view, namely, not to set creeds by the ears but to make for the harmony of Truth and disclose how, not merely in the external world with the encircling atmosphere around, the overarching sky above and the firm earth under the foot but much more in the spiritual world, there is a Providence dispensing the light of Truth and imparting the hope of Faith unto all. It has now become a commonplace to say there is Truth in all systems. Says Max Muller: The nineteenth century was rich in discoveries; but the greatest of these is that of One Supreme Spirit having reported itself in all ages and countries from the British Isles right on to the end of the globe; so that, whether amongst the Druids or others before or after, there have been people blessed with the realisation of the

great 'I AM', the Reality of the *Paramapurusha*. This crowning discovery of the nineteenth century was foreshadowed by Rajah Rammohan Roy with unerring prevision. And with joy he communicated to others this grand outlook of his to the effect that none was a stranger or alien to another and there was no barrier between this race and that, because all were under the equal protection of the God of providence. He, as it were, summed up the whole world into one spiritual family and fraternity; and to this central truth of truths he adhered with singular zeal and resoluteness while the years of toleration had not yet come, still less those of catholic appreciation. Thus the outstanding feature of Rammohan is that he dedicated his life to a noble purpose in all its phases and that with unflinching zeal and unfailing devotion. He was, then, in every sense a great man, a glorious man, a man in whom God really dwelt and energised.

CLOSING REMARKS

Friends,

We have come to the close of a very interesting programme. I feel deeply thankful for having been provided with so refreshing and invigorating an occasion as this for my own personal benefit. To me, Rammohun Roy is a theme of interminable significance and inspiration. And, therefore, I am never tired of either meditating on his life and teachings or of hearing their numerous aspects presented so thoughtfully and eloquently as they have been this evening

by different exponents. To me it is a convincing proof of Rammohun Roy's greatness that his spirit so influences temperaments of divers types that they all seem to converge towards one noble sentiment of devout admiration. That is because his own great soul comprises in itself such a marvellous variety of virtues that he is able to make himself attractive and inspiring to various types of thought and experience. This evening we have had such beautiful illustrations of Rammohun's capacity for drawing out and eliciting admiration and enthusiasm from various types of persons — young and old, those that are rich in the lore of the East and those that have been long and deeply influenced by the culture of the West. All are at one in reverencing Rammohun Roy as a great man of the superior type appropriate to modern times, one in whom all human ideals find a converging and unifying harmony. To us Rammohun is not merely a great man of the nineteenth century but an inspiring and impelling influence for untold generations. May God in His grace unfold to an eager and reverent humanity the rich, vast and truly exalting worth of this great man! With that humble prayer at His footstool where all true worth can be verified, I bring the meeting to a close.

Om ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Santhih !

II
RAJAH RAMMOHUN ROY*
(1937)

We bow before Thee with all the reverence of adorers on this occasion, as we seek to realise Thy providence and to glorify Thee for Thy grace. Thou hast vouchsafed unto us of these latter days one who, through all the growth and expansion of his life, sought so strenuously and successfully to reveal how Thou art the great God of divine dispensations through all time. To Thee we render our humble and reverent obeisances. We proclaim Thy glory ; and with worshipping and glorifying spirits, we bow before Thee in thankfulness for all those who, before him and along with him and subsequent to him, bore witness to Thy watchful care for the race of man. Do Thou vouchsafe unto us the spirit of thoughtful and grateful appreciation towards the glorious work of that great master whom we are gathered here to remember and commemorate. May this gathering be granted the incalculable blessing of approaching greatness in the true spirit of appreciation for the nobleness of all inspiration ! Blessed be Thy name ! Blessed be Thy name ! Blessed be Thy name now and for ever !

*Presidential remarks at Brahmopasana Mandir, Cocanada, on the occasion of the anniversary celebrations(27-9-'37)

OPENING REMARKS

Sisters and Brothers,

If I am permitted a little humour on this occasion, I may say that, whereas the lifelong protest of Rajah Rammohun Roy was against following custom for custom's sake, it is nothing but rigid custom, however sanctified by regard, that can justify my presence again in this position. With humble trust in God, I shall have to lean upon your fraternal kindness in conducting the proceedings of this evening.

We are all at one in reverently celebrating this anniversary of Rajah Rammohun Roy — a sacrament solemnly observed all over the land and even beyond. Rammohun breathed his last on the 27th of September — in the early morning hours of the fourteenth day of the full-moon fortnight. It was very significant, as a lady-friend then at the bedside observed, that the moon was shining in all her glory while peace and serenity reigned everywhere. In those last moments, Rammohun's companion, a certain Mukherjee, uttered the sacred word 'Om' as the spirit was taking flight. His was a life which began with an aspiring 'Om' and closed with a worshipful 'Om'. In the spiritual significance of this circumstance lies the secret spring of his life through the stages of the beginning, the process and the perfection.

Commenting upon the well-known Islamic formula, 'There is no God but God; and Mahammad is His

(only) prophet', Gibbon, the historian, observes : 'an eternal truth and a necessary fiction' ! Gibbon was a Deist, a believer in the Propeller-conception of the Deity in relation to the universe. On the other hand, a Theist is one who believes in God as the essential Truth and in the prophet as a logical corollary. The prophet is a logical corollary of the Supreme God. Prophets are not only man-received but God-commissioned in order to ensure perpetual prominence for, and ceaseless adherence to, the word of God. A prophet is one who speaks for the glory of the Divine Dispenser of destinies. He is the ordained one of God ; and we receive him as God-sent, and we render to him all the homage due to the elect of God. We seek to realise in him the eternal relation that subsists between the human soul and the Divine Spirit. In no age can the absence of such emissaries of God be noticed. Unto every race God sends His messengers to disclose the truth in the form which best suits the time and the temper. It is this principle that is illustrated afresh in the life of Rammohun. In ardent personal experience, through laborious study and by means of devout worship, we should realise the fact that God's good men are in evidence in every age and in all lands. In relation to them, ours should be reverent attention and whole-hearted sympathy. The friends of Goethe were wrangling over the question which of the two, Goethe and Schiller, was the greater. Goethe entered in and observed, 'Rather than wrangle over our relative merits, why not you bless yourselves for having two such great men amongst you ?'

The prophet receives all that is important in the past, reflects on the present, and enriches the future. A true prophet has thus three distinct directions. He is a great reawakener, rekindling in the spirit of man the Divine spark that lies buried under the *debris* of custom and superstition—the reawakener, in his age and amidst his people, of all that is latent, potential and mightily possible in the human heart. He is also the great reconciler of the past with the present and of the manifestations of God with the operations of such manifestations. And lastly, with the help of this glimmer of Divine light in the human soul, he becomes the great reorganiser of society without losing sight of the deep basis on which all societies are constructed not by the process of substitution but by that of re-adjustment. The great reawakener in him is the Light of God; the great reconciler in him is the Harmony of God; and the great reconstructor in him is the glory of the Creative Geni^{us} of God.

A true and genuine heir of all the wisdom of his country's past, Rammohun reawakened the dead bones of the valley into a new life and light. He reconciled those various influences which to others appeared to be all too conflicting; and thus he brought into harmony all that was worthy in his nation and the nations around. He reconstructed India like the Father of Modern India that he was, as he proved himself to be also the reawakener of the past in the present and the reconciler of the East and the West. Had there been no Rammohun, there had been no modern times.

He gathered all collateral interests and focussed them up into one. And when he passed away, as Surendra-nath Banerjee said, half a dozen successors had to take up and carry on the work which he had done alone in different spheres.

CLOSING REMARKS

Religion is commonly understood to be faith in God. Religion, rightly understood, means faith not only in God but in the goodness of man. We believe that in every man there is an iota, a spark, a seed of goodness. Man would not be man if there were not that iota, that spark and that seed of goodness in him. Thus Religion, broadly viewed, means faith in God, in God's good men and in God's good works.

Rammohun, like every other hero, led a consistent life throughout. That is the life of true heroism. We have the picture of such a life in Wordsworth's *Happy Warrior*. It is just that consistency that is productive of goodness and that makes life truly beneficent. Rammohun was the true hero in whom dwelt goodness from the beginning to the end. The characteristic of the modern age is all-comprehensiveness. The ordinary, ancient conception of a great man was that his greatness is like the greatness of a tower. A tower shoots up; it is a beacon-light. But the true, modern conception of greatness recalls the greatness of a crysalline lake that spreads itself evenly in all directions. Rammohun was keenly alive in full to all the

interests of life. Nothing escaped his penetrating eye, nothing in which man's true interest lies. Rammohun has been characterised by Dr. Sir Brajendranath Seal as a man of a thousand years. It is a millennium alone that can reveal unto us the richness of his spiritual worth. He was a universal man, a man with an appeal to the universal in man. It is not because he is liked by all people that he becomes a universal man. The universal man approves himself as the living participator in the eternal element in every bosom. No wonder, therefore, that he feels like a soul's brother towards all men.

III
SWAMI DAYANANDA SARASWATHI*
(1933)

Years ago I was at Cuttack. There was a grand public meeting to celebrate the death-anniversary of Brahmananda Keshub Chandra Sen on the Eighth of January. One of the speakers was the leader of the local bar. He began his remarks with this sentence : 'I am old, I have a cold.' That was poetical ! Though I, too, am old and have a cold, you need not expect me to grow poetical over it on this occasion.

I should like to remind you of what you yourselves do know already—that this is the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Swami Dayananda Saraswathi. In Hindu terminology, it is called the *śraddha* day ; and *śraddha* is connected with *śraddha*. A certain grandeur, an amount of solemnity, almost a sacred temperament, is expected on the *śraddha* day. Our first duty, therefore, is to try and get into that *śraddha* temperament. Swami Dayananda will not receive from us the homage due to him, unless we bring a spirit of devotion to bear upon our endeavour to dwell upon the salient features of his great life, work and character. You all have heard in unsparing detail the life-story of

*Closing remarks as President of the Silver Jubilee celebrations at Brahmopasana Mandir, Cocanada (30-10-'33).

Dayananda Saraswathi sketched out by Brother Kalyanaswami Naidu garu. Yet, if one desires to be original, the fertility of the subject admits of new phases being presented and new aspects being brought into view.

Martin Luther was to appear before the Imperial Diet at Worms to meet the charge of heresy. He was determined to put himself up before the Tribunal but was remonstrated with by well-wishers who urged that there lay a tremendous danger in his attending the Diet. Luther answered that, though all the tiles upon all the houses in Worms should turn into so many devils to harass him, he was resolved to go forth and encounter them in defiance. So he faced the supreme Diet — a single, solitary monk against all the power and authority of the world—in vindication of what he held to be right. That was one of the greatest landmarks in the annals of the whole human race. History repeating itself here in this, our ancient land, I state the bare fact when I say there is nothing to compare to our single-handed *Sanyasin* confronting, in the name of the holy Vedas, the most potent and vigorous concourse of accredited *pandits*. This also is a landmark in the history not only of India but of the entire human race in its advocacy of Truth. Speaking of Rajah Rammohun Roy, Professor Max Muller applied to him the German word 'Konig' (King), meaning 'first in fight, first in flight' in standing by the Truth as God had revealed it to him. For his own part, Dayananda had to stand against quite a conclave of learned

oppositionists—a fact which we must realise adequately in our imagination. Here, on one side, stands all learning and influence focussed together, if possible, to silence and crush out the lonely heretic. There, on the other, stands the solitary protester, not reinforced by power, not sustained by followers, yet speaking out four-square to all the winds not with the conspiracy of a misrepresentation of hoary truth but with the burning conviction that the Veda is the voice of Truth. Such a person was a giant among pygmies, a luminary among twinkling lights, a mighty voice among feeble whispers. Dayananda should be realised in his transcendental altitude — not merely towering head and shoulders above, but gloriously outtopping, many another personality. How easily, how readily prone we are to adjust ourselves to the position that one unfriended voice is nowhere in the midst of such overpowering odds! ‘God and I against the whole world!’ — that was Dayananda on every occasion of fierce trial. We should recognise the intrepid boldness of this arch-champion of Truth. To such of us as do not believe in the infallibility of any book whatsoever, it must be like a stumbling-block to hear it declared that the *Mantra* portion of the Veda is an infallible revelation from Heaven. Ask the ordinary Sanskrit scholar who has imbibed knowledge through the traditional methods; and he will at once assure you that from the earliest *ṛik* to the latest commentary should be accepted as equally and uniformly infallible. Dayananda’s greatness lies, not in what he conserved as the Word of God, but in what he was bold enough to deny as the Word

of God. Except one Upanishad, all the Upanishads were given up as being of secondary importance. What a tremendous utterance that in itself! When I was in the Law College, my Lecturer told me this: 'If you are asked to cite the various authorities in Hindu Law, begin with *Srithi*, pass on to *Smrithi*, and finally come down to the rulings of the High Court. The latest should be reconciled with the earliest, and the old screwed up to the new'. Dayananda says you can reconcile the new with the old. During Prophet Mahammad's time, a woman could be purchased for so many coins and could be discarded, too, at any time; and the custom was for a man to marry from fifty to sixty women. Mahammad reduced that number to four. To have so brought down the number — that was a feat not only evidencing intelligence and tact but involving moral risk and responsibility which very few could undertake. And this should be borne in mind while speaking also of Swami Dayananda Saraswathi. The position which he held argued both intellectual vigour and moral heroism. Look at those principles circulated to you—the ten principles of the Swami's Vedism. Do they not sound modern, excepting one which may appear archaic? These modern principles were deduced by him from the most ancient of books. The real value of his work in this direction waits yet to be rightly estimated. If the past is a heritage of truth, it is then the part of wisdom to conserve the good things therein. The past is there; you must not do anything to contravene it. All that you hold dear in modern life, all that these advanced times have brought

home to you as fundamental to progressive life, you must conserve out of the past; only, you should not go beyond that. Take courage and keep up the continuity of the past. The wisdom of the ancients is on your side. Whether you agree with individual systems or not, that is a different matter. Dayananda says that the modern requirement is traceable to the ancient repositories. God has not left man unto himself; God is always the Care-taker of man. Dayananda's work is only a specific application of this general truth, whatever you may think of its nature. God has taken care of you through the past; God has taken care of the modern soul in and through the ancient souls. That way, you will find a strength, an invigoration, in that, after all, you are only sustaining and perpetuating what your forbears of the long ago saw and declared.

Rammohun and Dayananda are prophets of a new type. Take the ancient prophets of India. Great souls, undoubtedly! But in them life ran within circumscribed channels. Rammohun took an all-round view: no interest of man lies outside the pale of religious inspiration in its broader sense; and so the whole natural life shall grow and develope in all possible directions. All those aspects formed a concrete whole in the vision of Dayananda as well. The two were at one in demanding that life shall be taken in its multifarious phases.

I have one other observation to make; and it is this. Swami Dayananda laid tremendous emphasis on

Brahmacharya. He was himself full thirty-six years of age before he became a *sanyasin*. With the utmost rigour and the most unsparing discipline applied to himself, he fulfilled all the requirements of lifelong *Brahmacharya*. The individual and national adherence of India has all along been thorough to this rule of *Brahmacharya*. It is the stage of securely laying the foundations of life. Unless the foundations are well and truly laid, the superstructure is bound to prove all too weak. Dayananda could not have been the virile personality that he was but for his strict *Brahmacharya*. Build up your life on *Brahmacharya*, and you will live long and live well. Life must terminate only when its mission is done. Many a young man is reported to have said, 'I will lay down my life for my country.' But to *live* for your country is far, far nobler than to *die* for your country. The vow of *Brahmacharya* means not fore-going pleasure but conserving pleasure—conserving it in its proper limits as to when it is strictly due, how far it is to be rightly nurtured, how it is to be soberly enjoyed and fittingly shared. *Brahmacharya* ought to be an ideal dear to every young man, even apart from the length of his days. 'One crowded hour of glorious life is worth an age without a name'. The *Brahmacharya* vow, then, has by all means to be faithfully maintained after the model of Dayananda Saraswathi.

In due course, this hero of a hundred fights came to be patronised, even idolised, by the magnates of the land. Yet, his anathema went forth uncompromisingly where and when it was really called for.

'Maharajah! On the throne of the gods are now seated dogs!' A tremendous indictment it was against the personal immorality of his royal host. No wonder a human being took offence at it. The dire 'offender' was poisoned, it is said. He was not the man to mince his words when it came to denouncing vice and vileness. It was verily the work of a hundred souls that he accomplished single-handed. If we care to count life not by years but by deeds, then, surely, Dayananda was a very long-lived man upon earth.

The intrinsic worth, the latent potentiality, the hidden capacity, the fertilising force in every lofty career can be, as it must be, recognised only through the events that follow. It is not by idly contemplating upon the life-story of Swami Dayananda Saraswathi that we may arrive at a correct estimate of the personality and the performance, but only by diligently observing what mighty currents they were that flowed forth released out of the spring of that life and its labours. So it behoves us to study and survey, too, all the manifold emanations of that vital fountain-head. Rammohun helped to put an end to *Sati*. He laid the seed out of which grew the Widow Marriage Act. Dayananda laid emphasis on *Brahmacharya*. That day he planted the seed out of which has come the Sarda Act identified with him who is the central organising spirit of this semi-century after Dayananda. As Oliver Cromwell was the heir to the spirit of John Knox, so Haravilasa Sarada is amongst us the spiritual offspring of Dayananda Saraswathi. Those great national institutions

— the Dayananda Anglo-Vedic College, the Gurukula, the Orphanages and the like — they are all so many seeds once hidden in the soul of Swami Dayananda. That is how out of every great soul there spring forth many more great souls. Every great soul reproduces its own spirit in unfolding the bud hidden in other souls. Today is only the anniversary of the dissolution of the physical frame. For he who dwelt in the body is not dead by any means. Swamiji is still alive, a vivid personality, a vivifying force, a fertilising principle. Not for the bones which were buried fifty years back but for the spirit which liveth for evermore shall we continue to revere the name of Swami Dayananda Saraswathi. By dwelling upon the merits of such a dedicated life and character do we also grow from grace to grace beyond measure. Reverently, then, let our grateful spirits meditate upon the exalted spirit of him whose sacred memory has brought us here together on this solemn occasion.

IV
MAHARSHI DEVENDRANATH TAGORE*

(1930)

OPENING PRAYER

Thou the Supreme Parent of all souls ! Thou art the first and final, the immediate and infallible, Teacher of all inquiring spirits. Thy light of wisdom and Thy delight in creation — they are inextinguishable and interminable. From age to age and in country after country, Thy inspiring and sanctifying grace keeps achieving the salvation of all Thy offspring. It is Thine own indwelling spirit that sustaineth the soul's everlasting growth. And it is the very basic purpose of Thy creation to reproduce Thy sacred self in all Thy children. To this glorious, this divine end, Thou dost set up witness after witness, Thou dost send forth message after message, Thou dost sustain a ceaseless and ever-expanding stream of the heavenly dispensation of truth, love, righteousness and bliss. For this we render our devoutest tribute of reverence and gratitude unto Thee. Visioning Thy truth, living Thy love, exemplifying Thy righteousness, enjoying and imparting Thy bliss in one unbroken procession of glory, goodness and grace, sage after sage reveals to the minds and

*Presidential speeches at Brahmopasana Mandir, Coccana on twenty-fifth anniversary day (19.1.30).

hearts and souls of men the message of fore-ordained, pre-destined, eternally assured salvation in perfection. On this solemn day, we feel ourselves gathered together even by the urge of Thine own Holy Spirit to render our souls' profoundly grateful thanks unto Thee for one outstanding, inspiring, uplifting instance of Thy boundless solicitude for the eternal happiness of Thy children. And as we humbly and reverently dwell on the story of that Heaven-inspired pilgrimage even amidst us and in our day and generation, our hearts feel purified and our souls sanctified with the faith that Thou art the Living God for ever achieving the bliss of Thy children. For, this noble life lived under Thy inspiring and sanctifying influences is one more proof of Thy parental relationship with us. May we receive into our hearts and lives the full benefit of this auspicious hour with its rich and refreshing reminiscences ! And once again vowing allegiance unto Thee and confiding our destinies into Thy hands, may we be led by Thy grace to consecrate ourselves unto Thy worship and Thy service ! The vision beatific which Maharshi saw and, seeing, voiced forth in heavenly accents — may that vision, even through Thy free and ever-available grace, be in some humble measure vouchsafed unto us also that thus, studying that life with hearts purified by fidelity to Thee and souls hallowed by consecration to Thee, we may be blessed with an ample manifestation of the heavenly grace that dwelt in him and worked miracles of sanctity through him ! Bless us with the true, genuine spirit of faith in the dispensations of Thy grace through Thy own chosen oracles. Blessed

be Thou that Thou hast thus called us together in Thy mercy ! And may Thy blessing prove rich in the harvest of regenerated faith and replenished love in the life of each one of us ! This is our humble prayer. Do Thou most mercifully vouchsafe it.

Om ! Thath Sath !

OPENING REMARKS

Sisters and Brothers,

It is proof of the real success of the mission of a God-inspired life that the day on which the soul that dwelt amidst us and discovered the glory of God was translated to higher spheres of sublimer communion with God, is year after year observed, not in a spirit of sorrow, not with a sense of bereavement, but with the sentiment of thankfulness and trust. The career here below of him whose ascension took place exactly a quarter of a century ago, is one signal evidence, to a most remarkable degree, of God's perennial inspiration unto all ages and all countries. As we study the story of the race with reference to the progress of high thought, lofty sentiment, noble resolve and selfless service, it is borne in upon us in quite a marvellous manner that there has been ordained by God a stately procession, an inspiring brotherhood, of God-seeing, God-indwelt souls in all ages and in all lands. To my mind, it is the most convincing proof of the benignity of God's relations with man that this succession of seers

and saints is never broken, never hindered. And though it may be due to the fact of proximity of interest, of closeness of relation, it may yet be permitted to state that this wonderful demonstration of the dispensation of God through an unbroken band of Heaven-inspired, Heaven-guided messengers is nowhere more vividly verified to human mind and soul than in this dear mother-country of ours. Every land, surely, has its own worthies, and every age its own exemplars. Without presuming, however, to finally appraise their relative value, I may be permitted to venture the observation that in few lands, if any, has there been brought out a procession of Heaven-bound pilgrims in so marked a degree as in India. A band of such Heaven-bound pilgrims with love in their hearts, devotion in their souls and a holy chant in their inmost beings, has been an essential and characteristic institution in India. Generation after generation, age after age, from the earliest epoch of recorded history, this country has produced saint after saint endowed with a most vivid conviction of, and a most enraptured companionship with, God, as witnessed in a life of God-possessed, God-intoxicated beatitude.

And one of them is Maharshi Devendranath Tagore. As revered Pandit Sivanath Sastri has observed, not in the partisan spirit of a follower, but with the impartial judgment of a historian, Maharshi Devendranath Tagore is one of the profoundest religious genuises that India has produced. And as we study the history of his soul's evolution as set forth in his own matchless

Autobiography, we feel that here really was a man that walked not only under the oversight of his God but in perpetual companionship with Him. He brings us the reassuring and cheering message, even in these latter days when people are, if not sceptical, at any rate cold in the faith that God still works in the soul of man, that the Holy Spirit of God is never dormant, is, not even for a moment, passive. The Supreme One, the Self of the self, the Soul of the soul — the Light in the intellect, the Love in the heart, the Command in the conscience, the Bliss in the soul — He is always active, most intensely operative, towards the advancement and happiness of His children. Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, who was called up to a closer communion with his God exactly a quarter of a century ago, lived a life so impressively and so abundantly influenced with a sense of the supreme Reality of an all-governing and all-sanctifying God that it is literally true to say that his life furnishes one of the most convincing proofs of Divine dispensation in all ages.

Born in 1817 and educated in various institutions, Devendranath was the eldest son of the most fashionable and the most opulent Zamindar of the day in Bengal. Till he reached adolescence, he had been accustomed to all the bewitching and beguiling attractions of a life of enjoyment and luxury. Not that he had sinned consciously; but he had been a child only of secular occupations and interests. Then there came upon him a wondrous change through that free operation of the grace of God which is unto them that have

experienced it the most telling testimony to God's direct dealings with the alert human soul. Even through this free gift of Grace Divine, his inner eye was opened to the abiding realities of things. He was seated on a coarse mat at the dismal burning-ghat where his grandmother's cherished remains were being consumed in the blazing fire. He tells us he then felt, through no effort and with no anticipation on his part, the inrush of a new sentiment—even that of the unity and sublimity of the purpose of God's creation. Not the phenomenal current of surface occurrences but the profound stream of Divine influences was, as it were, in a new torrent opened into his heart. He adds that the whole world assumed a new value and evoked a new rapture; and he felt that all over the universe there was a Divine light shed. From that day, through all the vicissitudes of the soul's sorrows and sufferings, enjoyments and ecstasies, he passed on stage by stage in the transition from one who glimpsed the Eternal Beauty into one who felt himself and the whole world transfigured by a Heavenly Glory. The various stages in this marvellous development of his spiritual life are remarkably identical with the corresponding experiences of other God-illumined souls. So that, as Miss Underhill observes, his Autobiography is one of the few truly first-rate records of the soul's outreaching into Eternal Reality. And we find that, losing the charm of the work-a-day attractions of life, he felt himself blasted for a while, as is the experience of those who, weaned from a life of sense-enjoyment, find themselves suddenly deserted in a wilderness of arid loneliness. All that makes

life a treasure to the ordinary man being completely wiped out, the soul comes to be face to face with utter, confounding darkness everywhere. The face of allure-
 ment being veiled apparently for ever, the soul cries out in anguish for a vision of higher beauty. But after the first glimpse when, as the sufi puts it, the Beloved for a moment lifts the veil and loosens the cur-
 He once again envelopes Himself away from the eager, yearning soul of the hapless disenchanted. This process in the Divine self-donation, as the mystics call it, is a terrible experience which every pilgrim of the Holy Spirit has to endure. Accordingly, in those days when the heart ached with the void of the absence of any interest in life and the soul felt itself forlorn in darkness, Maharshi found, as he says, the very rays of the sun surcharged with gloom. 'Where is the Glory I glimpsed at the burning-ghat? Is it eclipsed for evermore? If so, what is there to make existence a Divine gift?' The pleasures of the world thus withdrawn, the joys of the soul thus withheld, he was in that abysmal chasm of gloom in which the heart feels every throb and ever beat as no other than a touch of death. Death itself were immensely preferable to this torment of the soul. Perched on his couch, lost in this soul-anguish, he did not know how the hours passed and how he could get through even the elementary functions of life. The home is desolate. He goes out into the Botanical Gardens. There he finds, in the sun above, a spot of gloom and, in the verdure around, a veritable eyesore. 'Where can I get that Radiance that was granted me to glimpse at the burning-ghat?' Of those that have once sighted this heavenly

radiance and entrancing beauty, though for a moment like a flash of lightning in the dark night, and lost sight of it, there have been ever so many—God-bereft *bhaktas* consumed by the fires of *viraham* who have gone about beseeching dumb animals and even inanimate objects to show them their Beloved One again. Enquires one of them — ‘Thou *kokil*, thou must have caught thy song from the celestial accents of the Beloved ; oh, where is He ? Thou fawn, thou must have copied the entrancing look of the Beloved ; oh, where is He ? Thou creeper laden with charming flowers, thou must have borrowed thy fragrance from the breath of the Beloved ; oh, where is He ? Thou swan, nymph-like, thou must have learnt thy attractive movement from the gait of the Beloved ; oh, where is He ?’ But there comes no answer. The Beloved, Blessed One seems to test the heart that He desires to turn into His own home and shrine : ‘Thou shalt suffer the torment of exile before thou shalt realise the bliss of union.’ Whether Jesus goes out into the wilderness or Buddha turns away from home and wanders abroad, it is the same phenomenon. After the first glimpse that captivates the soul, there follows the anguishing experience of desertion and banishment. Through eight years, Maharshi works on, searching back for the Beauty disclosed for a moment at the burning-ghat. Thus, as the Rishis say, first there is the *darsanam* (glimpse) ; then there is the *vyakulam* (restlessness of quest). Or, as the Sufis have it, God gives a *kashish*, a mighty pull, and then lets go and asks the devotee to make his *koshish*, his restless search, his heart-straining and blood-draining quest. The

powerful Magnet gives the pull just to test how far the iron responds. Until the consuming hunger is felt so excruciatingly as to exclaim, 'I cannot live without Him,' God remains only on the outskirts, never deserting the soul absolutely but brooding over the spirit to call forth its latent spiritual vitality. Thus struggling on, the pilgrim eagerly seeks confirmation and assurance, even through companionship, that he is not really deserted.

To Maharshi Devendranath Tagore this guarantee came from two sources. That noble harbinger of a renewed gospel of the direct revelation of God unto the human soul, Rajah Rammohun Roy, when leaving India — at that time, Devendranath was only twelve or thirteen years old — had placed his hand upon his head and said, 'Brother, I make you the successor to my seat (*gaddi*).' Those cryptic words he now recalled. He also remembered how on various occasions Rammohun Roy had told him negatively of the inutility of idol-worship and affirmatively of the eternal communion between God and man. All this now came up to the surface; and he said to himself, as Rammohun had assured him, 'So, too, shall I obtain the joy of this direct communion with God.' On another occasion, he came upon a random sheet of printed matter and found it was something in Sanskrit and gave it to the family priest and asked him to interpret it to him. The priest looked into the sheet and said he could not explain its contents himself but pointed to Pandit Ramachandra Vidyavagish, the minister of the Brahma Samaj. Vidyavagish was sent for and said they had

before them the Isopanishad, which opened with the most inspiring declaration, 'This whole universe is enveloped in God.' Then, there was a jubilant feeling in Maharshi's heart, 'This is just what I have been seeking'. Rammohun's assurance in the past and this declaration from the still hoary antiquity as to the Spirit of God in living touch with every object in the cosmic whole — these constituted for him the opening again of the closed-door; and he said, 'I have come to that stage when, as the Upanishads tell us, after *darsanam* there is *sravanam*, and, after that, *mananam* — all enacted within my own self'. Panting for God-vision with eager search and revolving it over and over, one at last sees that every object is a symbolic token of the immanent presence of God.

And so Devendranath proceeds in his career stage by stage with the renewed vitality of spirit in himself, until at last he is faced with the eternal test of saving truth, 'Wouldst thou gain the Supreme Soul? Then, for ever renounce thy tiny soul; aye, it must be at the cost of not only the sacrifice but the surrender of the whole world.' This surrender of his entire possessions with the whole of his life he makes in a splendid manner. When the father dies and the business firm fails and a debt of one lakh of rupees is left with, however, a portion of the family property parcelled out and placed under a trust safe from the creditors by the foresight of that father, Maharshi stands out at the meeting of the creditors and says that not only all the assets of the firm but also the entire private

property under protection for the family shall go to the creditors. Thus alone can he justify himself to the Inner Witness by the surrender of the morally available as well as the legally procurable assets. And the creditors are, some of them, so far moved as to burst into tears at this rare spectacle of integrity of purpose. The family long accustomed to a princely income is henceforth to live on a small monthly allowance. All its other members bitterly complain that he is putting them to no end of suffering and privation by his impenetrable behaviour. But he avows with satisfaction, 'We have this day performed the *Viśvajityagnam*—the supreme sacrifice of surrendering all for Truth.' It is said that he who had never before set out but in the most fashionable conveyances and had always worn the costliest dress, would now be seen walking on foot to the Samaj Mandir in torn clothes darned by the female members of the family. He gave up all but not the integrity of his spirit. When Tej Bahadur, the Sikh Guru, was asked whether he was a prophet and could perform a miracle, he said, 'I shall show a miracle when I am dead.' His head is cut off by the persecutor. They open it and there find this declaration of truth: 'I have given up my head but not my truth.' Here is the greatest miracle of the human soul. This moral integrity, this spiritual fidelity, is, as Emerson observes, the first miracle out of which all other miracles emanate.

Another way in which Maharshi evinced self-reverence as the basic fact in moral power related to the

earlier occasion of his father's death. He had signed the Brahma Covenant and abjured all part and participation in idolatious rites. The funeral obsequies had to be performed. Influential friends and relations, uncles and aunts, sisters and brothers — all said in one voice, 'Don't provoke society by your so-called fidelity to the Brahma Covenant'. 'But I have signed the Covenant; I cannot be disloyal. The covenant is with God, not with *sangha*. It is sealed by the fidelity of the soul in the presence and on the witness of the Holy Spirit.' Thus did he justify himself as a fit receptacle of the grace and righteousness of God.

So vivid and intense was his faith in, and experience of, the presence of God that, according to an anecdote reminding us of the life of Prahlada, he was once with his uncle, Prasanna Kumar Tagore; and the uncle asked him, 'How can you say that there is a God?' and was at once put the counter-question, 'How can you prove there is that wall over there?' Says the interrogator, 'Why, where is the need to ask about the wall? It is there patent.' And Maharshi rejoins, 'Where is the need to ask about God either? He is manifest in you and around you. It, too, needs no proof.' This vividness, with which he realised his God wherever he was, constituted the inner significance of his whole life. Communion with God was the all-absorbing occupation of his life. From that stand-point, he understood and judged every incident in life. 'Is this indicative of God? Does this remind me of God? Am I brought by this into the near presence of God?'—that was the single,

supreme concern of his soul. In the Himalayan solitudes, he finds a mass of beautiful flowers and says, 'Is this not proof enough that the Divine Mother is the Parent of *Anandam*? And am I not here in the lap of Love, even while the charm and fragrance of life is so lavishly bestowed on these unscaled heights?' Again, when his acts were called in question and criticised in certain quarters, he would not bring himself to make any answer, because he held that the acts of men were not to be judged but must be allowed to pass by like negligible deviations from the path of life unless animated by the truth of Divine inspiration. As Pandit Sivanath Sastri points out, in the Autobiography he stopped short on this side of the schism between himself and Keshub, because he did not want to enter into controversy. The next inspiring instance of his strong God-possession is recorded towards the close of the Autobiography. He is on the Himalayan heights in the cold months of the year. Keeping the doors and windows open, he sits up muffled in blankets and allows the cold blasts to blow over him, absorbed in enrapturing communion with God. And there he strikes upon first principles and realises that, while the ancient sages said that all things are enveloped in God, his own experience is that he has enveloped all things with God; so that nothing can be conceived as apart from, devoid of, unoccupied by, the presence of God, the all-pervading and all-quickenings Spirit, and man himself is transfigured into his Maker's reflection. During the nights when Maharshi thus felt the intimate companionship of God, he would repeat aloud in ecstasy the verse in Hafiz signifying, 'Do not

bring a lamp into my audience-hall tonight, seeing that the full moon, my friend, is shining here'. And then there supervened the solemn resolve, 'Hence forward, I shall radiate light from my heart upon the world, since I have reached the sun and darkness has vanished.' That is Transfiguration.

Next comes the greatest crisis of all during the mystic's progress from the life of union even into the life of unity or unification. After having vividly visioned his God as enveloping the halo of the whole world, he stands on the mountain-peak and finds a stream descending clear and crystalline, bounding from rock to rock and soon getting defiled with dirt and dust but still dashing on along its fertilising course to the meadows below. He says, 'How marvellous!' He hears a mysterious voice: 'Go thou forth like the stream into the levels below and freely impart to Thy sisters and brothers the very joy thou hast received here.' 'Shall I hurl myself again into the vortex of the world? Shall my clear soul be tainted with worldly environments? Am I to be deprived of the prize earned?' 'Yes; thou shalt not live for thyself but for others. This donation of God's grace is, indeed, a trust for the benefit of others'. The whole day he could not eat; the whole night he could not sleep. But go he must. And he says, 'Subduing my will into acceptance of His will, I said: Thy servant shall obey'. He came and threw himself into the work of the Brahma Samaj with irrepressible vigour and inexhaustible resourcefulness. And what had been a tiny glimmer of light, almost a

vanishing point, he soon developed into the shining orb of a community of believers and a fraternity of worshippers. And on that blessed occasion when, later, towards the close of his life, those who had learnt to look up to him as their *Pradhanacharya*, gathered round to offer him the tribute of grateful reverence, how delighted he felt that there had formed this community of believers in the One Only God and this fraternity of worshippers of that God in spirit and in truth !

Such was the life-career of Maharshi Devendranath Tagore. I would earnestly advise every one here present to read, mark and inwardly digest the noble contents of his *Spiritual Autobiography*. You can study it to your everlasting benefit, whichever faith you belong to. Unto him God was not the God of this sect or of that race but an ever-loving, omni-pervasive Spirit whose self-donation in love could make every life a song of harmony and a chant of hallelujah. It is this life we are here to contemplate. Pardon me that I have engaged you thus far. For, the theme of Maharshi is unto me a fountain-head, a spring, of vivid and sanctifying reminiscences. I can never speak myself out on this subject. If I have overtaxed your patience, I can only say, sisters and brothers, ' Bear with me for the sake of, out of reverence for, him whose life is a heavenly heritage unto all seekers after God.'

CLOSING REMARKS

Maharshi Devendranath Tagore's spiritual achievement and spiritual triumph is to us a testimony to the

rich possibilities of Mother India's spiritual culture. But this spiritual culture we shall not make the mistake of completely identifying with Hindu culture. Certainly, the staple in his case was Hindu culture. But he gathered strength and joy from Islamic culture as well, as witness, in particular, his assimilation of Hafiz. He did not at any time show indications of having derived spiritual strength and joy from the Christian Scriptures. Yet he was a very close and earnest student of Western philosophy and metaphysics. Thus, what Maharshi teaches us is that the heritage of the past in India is rich and ample enough to form a sure foundation and even a spacious superstructure for India's national regeneration and re-establishment in the domain of the highest truth and the sublimest sentiment. Only, we should realise that India is a composite of several cultures; and it is for us freely to avail ourselves of them all, while, of course, bound by the very life that courses in our veins to be primarily related to Hindu culture.

Maharshi again and again declares that there is direct and intimate contact between God and every soul. The Upanishads are replete with spiritual teachings. Hafiz and the other Sufi mystics are great exponents of truth, love and beauty. But these all are only accessories. The fundamental fact or principle is that the Divine Spirit and the human soul are in eternal relation. The true essence of religion consists in immediate realisation of the soul's relation with God through direct and intimate experiences. Maharshi

exemplifies this valuable truth in his own life. True, the Upanishads were a source of abundant inspiration to him. But it was God that revealed and interpreted the Upanishads to him. Unto each one of us comes from him the welcome message that, if only we turn unto Him even in the direst, most despondent hour of spiritual prostration and helplessness and say, 'Thou art my Refuge (*Saranyam*); I do want Thee', then, as is symbolised in Gajendra, Divine Grace speeds into our being and makes us blessed. That is Maharshi's message — the universality of God's inspiration for all that wait upon Him in prayer. So let it revive in ourselves once again, as it is meant to do, the trust and assurance that each is in the hands of the All-merciful, the All-compassionate, the All-cherishing, the All-sanctifying One — yes, safe in the keeping of the One Benignant Power 'or in the natal or the mortal hour' and, what is more, truly blessed in the embrace of the One Benignant Parent all through life and beyond. That makes life even now and here a Divine gift. God is ever available even to the humblest and the lowliest. Maharshi points us to Him who has given life and has taken the responsibility to instruct and illumine, to sanctify and bless. As observed, indeed, by all profound students of religion, the ultimate function of every teacher is, after all, not to bring to us the message of God but to take us into the presence of God; not to be a path-indicator but a co-pilgrim, and that only up to the pre-final stage. In the final, crowning stage, it is all 'alone to the Alone' — the *upasana* of the devotee and the Deity being seated

together in communion. God be blessed, then, that, setting aside His majesty and entering into the limitations of human aspiration, He renders Himself actively available unto each one of us, all for our redemption !

Om ! That h Sath !

V

'SANTINIKETAN' DISCOURSES IN TELUGU* (1938)

The Heaven-illuminated Seer of Santiniketan is a world-honoured teacher of sanctifying Truth. His sublime discourses, gathered into several volumes with the happy title of *Santiniketan*, are an inexhaustible mine of spiritual wealth. This choice selection of thirty-two of those rare gems constitutes a priceless casket. Gifted with sustained zeal for selfless work in the promotion of true culture, my good friend, Mr. A. Chalamayya, has, through this well-executed version into Telugu of those soul-illuminating discourses, rendered praiseworthy service to all sincere seekers after God in Andhradesa. He is eminently qualified for the responsible task undertaken. The formative period of his life was spent at that sanctuary of the Holy Spirit, the Bolpur Ashram ; where his soul was nurtured with wisdom and devotion. He possesses a thorough command over the Bengali language—especially, of that unique idiom associated with the name of the *Gurudev*. He has already produced several useful—instructive and popular—works in Telugu. His daily occupation is to mould youthful lives to noble ends. Hence,

*Foreword to Mr. A. Chalamayya's collection of translations from Rabindranath Tagore.

it may be confidently expected, under Providence, that this publication will prove a distinctly valuable addition to the section of Telugu Literature devoted to the quest of the eternal verities.

Selected and arranged with great care, these highly thoughtful discourses open with an exposition of the profoundly mystic '*Pranavam*' and lead up to the sublime serenity of '*Tapovanam*', comprising a wide range of topics of abiding interest as powerful aids to deep contemplation and devout worship. Their perusal impresses even a very casual reader with the charm of rich imagery and poetic grace, all inducing prayerful meditation and soul-deep devotion. The significance of '*Brahmotsavam*'; the exposition of '*Santam, Sivam and Adwaitam*' in an interrelated sequence; the reality of '*Prardhana*' and its necessity, reveal the Master's power to stir the soul to its depths. '*Satyam Jnana Manantam Brahma*' is a sacred chant of the Rishi as he visions the all-sustaining, the all-penetrating and the all-embracing Reality as the Eternal One. Lastly, there is '*Tapovanam*', the sylvan shrine of the Rishis and the cradle of the age-long and ever-expanding culture of Bharatavarsha. Here is brought out the striking contrast between the nature-evolved civilisation of the Orient with its contemplative serenity and the desire-urged civilisation of the Occident with its restless activity. Here is set forth the theme that India's culture has sprung out of the seer's meditations amidst forest cloisters and the poet's raptures under nature's impulses. It is also brought out vividly that life is

here actuated by a spirit of surrender and sacrifice un-
mindful of acquisitions and enjoyments.

Choice is difficult where every object is a jewel ;
but to the devout spirit it will be a most profitable oc-
cupation to read and revolve over the discourses titled
' *Rasadharmam*,' ' *Poornatvam*,' ' *Niyamam* and *Mukti*,'
' *Muktimargam*,' ' *Anantuni ichcha* ' etc.

In rendering these discourses from Bengali into
Telugu, the learned translator has evidently endeavoured
to keep as close to the original as the two idioms
permit. Hence, a certain Bengali tinge is unavoidable;
however, the language throughout is chaste and the
exposition clear. It is, therefore, hoped that the book,
perused with discernment of mind and kinship of spi-
rit, will amply fulfil its purpose of commending serious
thoughts, lofty sentiments, exalted ideals and holy en-
deavours. With that hope this humble offering is
rendered at the Seat of Grace.

APPENDIXES

(A)
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE*
(1914)

I beg to begin this statement with the remark that, having all along been in private service, I am not conversant with the details of the public section of the Educational Service, but that, having been in the field of work for over a quarter of a century, I believe I am acquainted with the main features of the system.

As a preliminary remark, I beg to observe that, as the aim of education is to elicit and develop the best of intelligence and of character that is innate in a person and as the real vitality of a people lies in this development, too much emphasis cannot be laid upon the important place due to the educational section in the administrative system of that people. One may, therefore, respectfully submit that the Educational Service needs and merits a closer attention and a more liberal appreciation than almost any other section of the Public Services.

What with the nature of the ideas that predominated at the time when the present educational system was inaugurated and what with the peculiar position

*Statement presented to the Public Service Royal Commission.

then presented by the country with its peculiar linguistic, social and political conditions, a course and a policy of education largely designed on Western models had to be started with. But not being in organic kinship with the system after which it was, at first, shaped, the Indian system did not quite adequately share in the rapid developments of its original in the West. Further, handicapped with the limitations of a borrowed system, it could not steadily keep pace with the increasing demands of the people for an efficient and up-to-date system of education; and economic or financial considerations added not a little to this disadvantage. Again, the process whereby, at least in this Presidency, a very considerable portion of the field of general education has been occupied by other than Government agency, has tended to bring out some of the defects of the system.

But it has to be borne in mind more than is, I believe, generally done that the shortcomings are in the system itself and can be remedied only when it is made clear and admitted that the system needs a revision. What may, therefore, look, on the one hand, like 'invidiousness' or 'jobbery' may be an honest misapplication of a sound principle; and what may appear, on the other hand, as substantial improvement may be mere 'pruning.' It is, therefore, respectfully submitted that the essential consideration is whether or not the times call for a reconstruction of the system itself. And for the purposes of this Royal Commission, the main question is how far the Educational

Service as one of the Public Services stands in need of such a *reconstruction* as a service.

The features of the Educational Service that have been provoking considerable criticism are, after all, such features as, in the main, it has in common with most of the other services. But owing to three reasons—namely, that educated Indians, merely in virtue of their general education, feel they can better understand and judge of the Educational Service than almost any other service; that scores of our youth see, year in, year out, several glaring instances of what strikes them as a defective arrangement; and that the work turned out by institutions not under Government agency repeatedly presents itself for a comparison by no means unfavourable to them—for these three reasons, the number of those dwelling upon the shortcomings of this Service is comparatively much larger than in the case of any other service.

The general feeling among this body—and it includes most of the Indian Educationists — is that, it being granted that the education — the training, instruction and guidance — of a nation's youth will best vest in the cultured members of that nation itself, the time is ripe enough for an extensive experiment in that direction. The spread of general culture over a rapidly increasing area with the resultant public opinion in favour of higher scholarship, the new-born sense of nationality with its eager desire for efficiency, the powerful impetus—both legislative and financial

—given by the Government to thoroughness, the encouraging results of the work done alike by Government Colleges in the Districts and by indigenous Institutions — both almost wholly manned by Indians — and (above all) the fruitful labours of excellent educationists during half a century — all these considerations would seem to lend large support to the view that in the field of education—especially, in Arts and in Law—India may be permitted *rapidly* to develop the valuable virtue of self-reliance. And it is respectfully submitted that the vital question before the Commission is to judge how far this faith is justified.

Having made these preliminary observations and with apologies for their length, I shall next submit a few specific points for consideration.

1. Believing as I do that no other service, with the exception of the Judicial, demands in its members the same degree of culture and character combined in one as the Educational Service does, I am of opinion that the scale of salaries obtaining in the Service merits considerable increase. Leaving out exceptions, most educated persons would seem to feel that of the great prizes of public life but few—very few—fall to the share of the Educational Service; and, accordingly, that Service is not much in favour even with those educated men who are not particularly ambitious. Further, in this as in no other service, the scale of salaries of the Public determines that of the Private service; while, in this, as in almost no other profession,

the Private agency is a very important counter-part of the Public. It is, therefore, submitted that this question deserves very careful and sympathetic consideration. I beg to suggest a scale (in its outlines) of salaries like the one following :—

Class III ... Rs. 100—10— 250

Class II ... Rs. 250—25— 500

Class I ... Rs. 600—50—1200

Special Class...Rs. 1200 to 1800

Class III will include Sub-Assistant Inspectors of Schools, Demonstrators and Tutors, Higher Assistants in Secondary Schools, Assistant Lecturers in Colleges, &c.

Class II will include Assistant Inspectors of Schools, Head Masters of Secondary Schools, Lecturers and Junior Professors in Colleges, Chief Assistants in Technical and Science Institutions, &c.

Class I will include Inspectors of Schools, Senior Professors in Colleges, Heads of Technical Institutions, &c.

The Special Class will include Specialists and Directors of Research Work and of Post-Graduate Studies.

Increments within each Class should invariably depend upon the length of service and not upon vacancies. And promotion from one Class to another should go wholly by merit and not by seniority. This presupposes considerable elasticity, which is quite essential

in the Educational Department. *As a rule*, a member starting in one Class may not be allowed to go *beyond the next higher Class*. One very sore point in the present system is that men discharging duties of practically equal importance draw, often, unequal pays; and, in my view, this anomaly characterises this far more than it does any other service. It has, therefore, to be of the very essence of a revised system to see that "work" and "wages" are much better harmonised. Personally, I see no objection to a concession in the matter of pay being shown to a European in the higher stages of Class I and in the Special Class. The lower pay thought enough for an Indian in those stages of the Service need neither imply any depreciation of his work nor be due to any racial considerations. It will represent the normal standard to which exceptions have, sooner or later, to be adjusted. But difference in pay should scrupulously be dissociated from questions of status, promotion, precedence and other prerogatives.

Another point meriting mention is whether or not in all Classes—especially, in Class I—Professorial work should not be better remunerated than Inspecting work. In my humble opinion, a concession of this nature to Professorial work is merited by the consideration that, rightly done, it entails a larger *mental* strain and is of a higher *mental* value than the other.

2. *Recruitment and Training.*

(a) Class III will consist almost wholly of Statutory Indians and will be composed of graduates of

promise and holders of "Master's" or "Honors" Degrees, the latter being, as a rule, started somewhere higher than at the bottom of the Class.

Class II will be composed 50% of those sent up, *on merit*, from Class III, 25% of Indians directly appointed on the ground of a brilliant University career in India, and 25% of those brought in from abroad for special subjects or to be trained for Class I. In the case of these last, a concession as to start will have to be made.

Class I will be composed 50% of those promoted, *on merit*, from Class II and 50% of those nominated from those outside the service, whether in India or in foreign countries.

The Special Class may *occasionally* admit a member of Class I by promotion on merit; but, as a rule, it will consist of those specially appointed to it and invariably of those educated or specially trained in Europe or America.

Appointments to Classes III and II should wholly vest in the Local Governments. Appointments to Class I would *advantageously* be similarly made, with (1) a right of appeal to the Government of India in cases of promotions from Class II and (2) the approval of that Government in cases of direct nomination. In cases of this last category, the help and advice of the Office of the Secretary of State may be obtained in securing

satisfactory candidates from abroad. In all cases of appointments by direct nomination into Classes II & I, the choice may largely be regulated by the advice of a Committee composed mostly of Educationists—Indian and non-Indian in about equal numbers.

All admissions to the Special Class may be made by the Secretary of State in consultation with the Government of India.

To give adequate chances to Indian candidates, vacancies to be filled up by direct nomination should be made known, far and wide, through Government Gazettes and through educational institutions. In making these direct appointments to Classes II and I, Indians of recognised ability in private institutions may, where available, be advantageously secured for the Public Service. At present, such cases occur seldom—almost never.

(b) In cases of promotions from Class II to Class I, the Department may prescribe and demand such special training, before confirmation, as it may deem necessary. But this special training could be within the country. In cases of direct appointments, there should be, in almost every case, a period of probation of a year or two to be devoted to special training, part of the period, at least, being spent by Indian candidates—*preferably* in direct appointments to Class II, and *compulsorily* in those to Class I—in Europe or America. Such training will necessarily relate itself to

the nature of the work that the candidate elects or is required to do. It seems to be desirable to make the special training for cases going under Class II more comprehensive or varied, though less advanced, than that for the higher Class. This will afford scope for further choice and specialisation as the person goes up in service. Part of this period for special training may profitably be devoted to studies not directly related to the candidate's chosen subject but ordinarily comprised in the sphere of general culture.

3. One point, almost essential, on which a remark or two may be submitted relates to the Inspecting section of the Service.

(a) It is highly desirable that the Inspecting officers should be distinctly marked off from the Teaching officers. No Lecturer or Professor, worth the name, will care voluntarily to go into the Inspecting line; and those that have been for any appreciable time in the Inspecting section generally fight shy of systematic teaching. The two branches require persons of very divergent tastes and temperaments; and there is *not much* in common between their respective duties.

(b) It is in this branch that the Indian element has, in the higher stages, to be considerably augmented. A knowledge of the aptitude and capacity of the average Indian teacher in the Secondary Schools; an acquaintance with the ways and tendencies of the average Indian student in the Primary and Secondary

Schools and with the essential requirements and the available resources of a school—these matters count for not a little in Educational progress, and the Indian is at an advantage in these respects. The European has, certainly, his own strong points ; but, to my mind, they are more easily impartable or communicable than those others in which he is at a disadvantage. Anyhow, it is pretty plain to any one acquainted with the system that the two communities may profitably meet *on equal terms* in this branch of Educational work. Periodical Conferences of Inspectors under the presidency of the Director of Public Instruction will greatly help to make methods and standards uniform—avoiding, if one may say so, the present jar between “ routine ” and “ innovation.”

4. A few other points may also be submitted for consideration.

(a) With well-chosen staffs, composed of distinguished graduates of the Indian Universities, education up to the B. A. Pass and B. L. Degrees may safely be left, *almost wholly*, in the hands of Indians. In the courses of studies for the Medical and Engineering Degrees, a considerably larger share in instruction than is allowed at present may be accorded to them. This involves the question of appropriate emoluments, status, &c.

(b) To facilitate the direct appointment of competent Indians to Classes II and I, the institution of a

number of scholarships or fellowships awarded on the ground of both results in public examinations and records and testimonials of work and life at College, will be highly desirable. They will provide a strong incentive to vigorous work and secure young men of promise pretty early in life to devote themselves to this high calling.

(c) To further female education, it is absolutely necessary that valuable inducements should be offered to well-educated ladies to qualify for, and join, the Service. For many years to come, even in Government or quasi-Government service, an efficient Indian lady-teacher or inspectress will have to be treated, as it were, as a "specialist."

(B)
MADRAS UNIVERSITY REORGANISATION*
(1923)

Could I have helped it, I should have avoided a minute of dissent. But the conditions under which a good portion of the work of the Select Committee had to be done makes a minute inevitable and obligatory. Almost at the very commencement, it was declared by the Hon'ble the Chairman and several other Hon : members that the Hon'ble Council had accepted the principle of the Bill as regards the "Limit," and the Committee could not go back on it. Apart from this assumption, which some members would not accept, the proceedings had not progressed far before it became plain that the Select Committee was, on one important matter, clearly divided into two sections (of course, unequal sections), one comprising those who felt, and the other those who did not feel, grave apprehensions about the future of the mufassal Colleges. Hence, most of the suggestions relating to those Institutions had to run the gauntlet of the majority; and in more instances than one, the Chairman's casting vote (very naturally given in favour of the original proposal of the Bill) decided the issue. How pronounced this difference was, might be surmised from the fact that more (a good deal

*Minute of Dissent from the Select Committee's Report to the Legislative Council.

more) than one half of the main text of the Select Committee's Report relates to matters affecting the mufassal Colleges. Accordingly, it is to those matters, as set out in Paragraphs 5 and 13 of the Select Committee's Report, that this note will mainly restrict itself. Here I may state that I am in general agreement with the substance of Sections 1, 2, 3, and 5 of the Minute of Dissent recorded by my Hon: colleagues, Dewan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao Pantulu Garu and Rao Bahadur C. V. S. Narasimha Raju Garu.

2. Section 5 of the Select Committee's Report states that two suggestions were made—one for the removal of the "Limit of the University" and the other for recognition of certain mufassal Colleges as nuclei of future Universities; and the Report records that both the suggestions were rejected — the first for its violation of a fundamental principle of the Bill and the second for its invidious consequences. It is, however, submitted that the first suggestion did not propose the elimination of any "limit" whatsoever. It desired that a really reasonable "limit" based on, or assorted to, the other vital marks of distinction between a so-called "Affiliated" and a so-called "Constituent" College should be prescribed. A reference to Definitions (a) and (b) under Section 2 will show how all the authoritative stress of the Legislature is laid on the accident of the geographical position of a College according as it is situated either within or without a certain 'limit', quite irrespective of the essential distinctions regarding the methods adopted, the standards

maintained and the objects pursued ; these altogether vital matters being left to be "prescribed" later on by the 'Authorities' of the University. To be sure, this method is altogether arbitrary; and if anything merits to be styled invidious, it is this method of determining a matter of great moment. The suggestion of the minority was that the distinction between a "Constituent" and an "Affiliated" College should primarily be based upon the capacity and the preparedness (or otherwise) of an institution to participate in the "higher teaching" and "research" work which the Bill proposes to develop and to respond to the endeavours after that "academic life" and that "corporate unity" which the Bill desires to foster. The so-called "limit" should be determined as a concomitant to those substantial points of distinction ; whereas the Bill starts by making an arbitrarily-fixed geographical limit the initial and basal criterion of the classification; and this means that Institutions are sorted according to the good luck which places one College within that "Limit" or the hard fate which places another College outside that "Limit"! Correct information and open mind being postulated, who can gainsay that there are some individual mufassal Colleges and at least two mufassal centres which can satisfy the demands and shoulder the responsibilities of "teaching" and of "residence" for University purposes as effectively as most of the Madras Colleges ? And yet they must be passed over, because they have the misfortune to be located outside the privileged pale ! What principle is involved in this method it is hard, indeed, to discover, unless pure

convention or sheer convenience be styled a principle. The second suggestion referred to in the same Section (Section 5) of the Select Committee's Report aimed at harmonising the preamble with the contents of the Bill through a distinct provision being embodied in the Bill itself for the establishment of an agency whose purpose, from the very outset, would be to lead towards the realisation of the second avowed object of the Bill, viz., to prepare for the institution of new Universities. Nothing was more remote from the intention of this suggestion than to propose an off-hand enumeration of Colleges to be recognised as nuclei of new Universities: that were invidiousness itself. What was actually and expressly suggested was that a careful inspection, by a properly constituted body, should first be made of the mufassal First-Grade Colleges with reference to their present condition and future possibilities; and as a result of that inspection, there should be drawn up a list, necessarily tentative, of Institutions that could be aided, by both funds and guidance, to develop high academic standards and healthy corporate life and could thus become University Centres. How else the avowed object of preparing for the institution of new Universities could be steadily furthered, it is again difficult to see. All the same, the two proposals were rejected, as several others were, without much ado.

3. Some of the other proposals similarly disposed of are mentioned in Paragraph 13 of the Select Committee's Report. One of them was the proposal that the composition of the Council of Affiliated Colleges

should be determined, even as its powers were defined, by the Act itself. If two virtually autonomous bodies like the Legislature and the Senate are to function, one for defining the powers and the other for determining the composition of one and the same body, obviously there is bound to be, with the duplication of the agencies, a complication and even an inarticulation of the details. The Council in question, even with the stunted powers vouchsafed to it, will have very responsible duties to discharge towards mufassal Colleges. The authority to define its power rightly vests in the Legislature ; and, for that very reason, the Legislature alone can judge correctly what the proper composition of that body should be. It may, by the way, be pointed out that the Council of Affiliated Colleges is the only " authority " of the University which is thus bifurcated between two organs of legislation; every other " authority " being placed, as to both its powers and its composition, wholly either under the Act or under the Statutes. Next, two other suggestions relating to the Council of Affiliated Colleges are mentioned in this Paragraph (No. 13) of the Select Committee's Report ; namely, the setting up of an Executive Committee of that Council and the creating of a separate fund for the mufassal Colleges. The Select Committee's Report states at some length the reasons which weighed with the majority for negating the proposal regarding an Executive Committee ; while all that the Report has to say about the other proposal regarding a separate fund is that it was urged by some members but that the Committee did not accept it. Probably, the Report

regards them, and, presumably, the majority of the Select Committee also viewed them, as so interlinked that they should rise or sink together. But, really, they are two distinct proposals, one concerned with the mode and the other with the means of operation. Anyhow, at no stage of the proceedings of the Select Committee did the difference in aim and, therefore, in opinion between the two sections of the Committee evince itself as being utterly irreconcilable as it did in connection with the consideration of these two suggestions. A set of proposals, generally agreed to by at least four, if not by five and even six, members of the Committee and enumerating a series of suggestions bearing upon the powers, functions, funds, composition, committees and other details appertaining to the Council of Affiliated Colleges, had been prepared and was presented to the Committee. But the majority decided that the two questions, whether the Council should be given an Executive Committee and whether the mufassal Colleges should be granted a separate fund, must be voted on and settled before the other proposals regarding powers, functions, *etc*, were gone into. Then it did not take the Committee much time and deliberation to negative the two proposals. They were practically forejudged; and after that, one need hardly describe the mutual understanding on which the rest of the discussion followed. However, it is submitted that the method adopted was far from the logical or natural. The need for an Executive Committee will depend obviously on the strength or composition of the general body and on the extent and variety of its

powers and functions. By the Bill as revised by the Select Committee, the Council of Affiliated Colleges will consist of about eighty members spread over the whole Presidency ; and its functions and powers, however limited and subordinate, will be such as to require it to be in constant touch, on the one hand, with the mufassal Colleges and, on the other, with the Syndicate and the Academic Council. Its functions are, to a considerable extent, akin, so far as mufassal Colleges are concerned, to the functions of the two last-named "authorities." In view, therefore, of these two considerations, namely, of its composition and of its functions, it is submitted that, for prompt and efficient work, an Executive Committee is highly desirable, in fact, indispensable. As regards a separate fund, its imperative necessity is emphatically urged by past experience. It is no exaggeration, I believe, to say that for a long while during the years gone by, the mufassal and the metropolitan Colleges have been as the Biblical lean kine and fat kine. Consequently, widespread and intense is the fear that in the years to come, with the alluring charms of a so-called residential University, the Madras Colleges will claim, and will be conceded, more than the proverbial lion's share of the funds either for themselves or for that University of which they are the heir by primogeniture. Hence, a distinct provision ensuring to the mufassal Colleges a just and adequate share in the University funds from all sources is due as a matter of equity and fair dealing. It will never do to treat the mufassal Colleges as integral for financial purposes but

excrement for academic ends. The minority suggested that those Colleges should receive, and have utilised for their benefit, a part (in proportion to the original contribution by their candidates) of the savings from the fee-income and that the apportionment of the other funds, as voted by the Legislative Council in the annual Budget, should be made on the basis of the suggestions or recommendations of a committee, representative of the Syndicate, the Academic Council, the Council of Affiliated Colleges and the Local Government. Next, a word or two might be given to the suggestions proposing merely permissive or enabling powers regarding courses and examinations for mufassal Colleges. It is submitted that the suggestion made was not altogether unlike the power given to the Academic Council by Section 24 (j). The Select Committee's Report refers to certain mufassal educationists consulted on the subject having been entirely opposed to the proposal. As I am not in possession of detailed information on this consultation, I shall not deny the statement. However, I shall submit that the statement admits of considerable modification. Our Hon: colleague, Rao Bahadur C. V. S. NarasimhaRaju Garu, presented a copy of the proceedings of a special meeting of the College Council of one of the leading Colleges in the North, which included a resolution asking for mufassal Colleges the power to hold their examinations. Further, the members who submitted the set of proposals above referred to mentioned that the Principal of a leading College in the South wanted such enabling or permissive powers to be given to the

Council of Affiliated Colleges. As for the plea that an emphatic declaration was made in the Legislative Council about there being no separate courses and no separate examinations, it may be observed that herein lies the self-contradiction of the Bill, in that it treats Madras and Mufassal Colleges as distinctly different classes in the matter of facilities, opportunities, methods and appliances but, none the less, wrings them into an identical position as regards the courses prescribed and the examinations demanded. It is exactly here that the Bill defects from the carefully considered line of action prescribed by the Calcutta University Commission's Report, which expressly declares that mufassal Colleges cannot 'keep step' with Calcutta Colleges and that uniform curricula and examinations "would be unfair to both sides." Should it be urged, as it might justly be urged, that, unlike the mufassal Colleges of Bengal, the mufassal Colleges of this Presidency could cope with the Madras Colleges on equal terms as regards curricula and examinations, does not that admission discredit the division of Madras and Mufassal Colleges into two distinct classes—constituent and affiliated—on a purely geographical basis?

4. The other points on which I have to dissent may be barely enumerated thus :

- (i) I doubt whether there is real analogy on this point between the Madras University and those modern Universities which are said to have a Pro-Chancellor. Is the Governor of a Province or a Presidency the *Ex-officio* Chancellor there? The

acceptance of the Minister for Education as the *Ex-Officio* Pro-Chancellor further complicates the matter. Is the Hon'ble Minister to be the common Pro-Chancellor for the several Universities which it is the hope or the ambition to establish in this Presidency?

- (ii) To my mind, it is more than a doubt whether it is natural or business-like that the "Local Bodies" should have so many as fifty-two representatives in the Senate.
 - (iii) It is clear to my mind that the assent of the Chancellor to the Statutes (only to the Statutes) is highly desirable. The Chancellor is an integral and important factor of the Senate, as he is also the Head of the Government which has to co-operate with, and to finance, the activities of the Senate. His assent to the general principles and the main methods of the policy to be pursued enters into the transaction almost as a matter of right. I fear it will be too sweeping a swing of the pendulum from the pre-requisite of his assent even to petty details and passing exigencies at the one end to the deletion of that assent even from Statutes defining the general policy at the other.
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(C)
EDUCATIONAL REORGANISATION *
(1923)

We, the undersigned members of the Committee, have not found it possible to agree with several of the conclusions arrived at by the majority. The chief points on which we deem it our duty to place our views before the Government are as follow:—

I UNIFICATION OF ELEMENTARY AND PRIMARY
EDUCATION

In our opinion, it was unfortunate that the Committee declined to consider Primary Education, notwithstanding the fact that the Government, on a special reference made by the President of the Committee, had informed him that the Committee was not precluded from considering the question and submitting its views. The votes being equally divided, the President did not feel at liberty, at that stage, to give his casting vote. However, those in favour of the Committee considering that question intended to recommend that the distinction now made between Primary and Elementary Education should be abolished,

*Joint Minute of Dissent with Messrs. C. R. Reddi, B. Muniswami Nayudu, T. A. Ramalinga Chettiar, C. P. Ramaswami Ayyer, P. C. Ethirajulu Nayudu and M. Krishnan Nayar on a Committee appointed by Government,

so as to secure equal educational opportunities for rural and urban children. The rural children at present get a kind of education that does not take them far. Moreover, the Elementary Education, as now given, has little of organic connection with the general system of education. Consequently, pupils that pass out of Elementary Schools feel handicapped as compared with urban children that go up from Primary Schools. A First Form thus composed cannot have a fairly uniform level of capacity and fitness for the Secondary course. Sir C. Sankaran Nair, when he was the Educational Member of the Government of India, stated emphatically that this distinction should be done away with, if the poorer class of pupils "are to have any real or English education." (See Page 15 of his Minute of Dissent appended to the Fourth Despatch of the Government of India). The Calcutta University Commission also observed that at the base of the Educational system there should be well-staffed Primary Schools giving a training liberal in spirit and yet adapted to local conditions, and that Primary Schools should be linked up to Secondary Education in its various grades. The Commission mentioned two considerations: (1) Agriculturists, in thinking of their sons' future, look beyond the horizon of village life. They wish to put their sons into callings access to which is through the English Secondary Schools. (2) There is an instinct that India will become a more industrial country and that new kinds of employment will be opening which require a sound Secondary education.

II MIDDLE SCHOOLS

If the view stated above be accepted, it follows that the Higher Elementary Schools will have to be transformed into Middle Schools. In case Elementary Education is reorganised as proposed above and, added to this, a policy of free and compulsory Primary Education is actively pursued, the number of pupils seeking admission to the Middle School course will be enormously increased. Consequently, in any well-considered programme, provision should be made for a fairly large number of schools in each Taluk. Then alone will rural children be enabled to tide over the most difficult stage of education, when they cannot be expected to leave their homes and reside in distant places for the sake of education. To the same end, the current conditions regarding the staffing and recognition of these Middle (or Incomplete Secondary) Schools should be carefully revised. Further, if the injurious consequences of a purely literary education are to be averted, this Middle grade education should become more practical and vocational, without failing to lead up to the High School stage. As this is the grade at which the Educational Department touches the largest number of pupils at a crucial period of life, its importance alike to progressive national life and to a well-designed educational organisation should be fully realised.

In regard to the content of the education to be given at this stage, the proposal of the Committee

may be accepted with reference to manual training and the optional subjects (such as agriculture, gardening etc.). But those proposals require modification in certain respects. They are defective in that they do not make the study of one or more of the *Practical Optional* subjects compulsory on each pupil. In our opinion, a carefully-planned course extending over three years and with one or two double periods given to it in a week's work, would quite suffice to give the training and to impart the knowledge here contemplated. The majority of the Committee held that a general educational system should not get mixed up with vocational pursuits. But we differ from this view for various reasons. It is common knowledge that the economic condition of the masses in India is far too poor for them to postpone the earning of their livelihood to such an age as children in richer countries could do. In numerous instances, hardly does the child enter well on boyhood when he is expected to contribute to the income of the family. Again, we cannot agree with the view that vocational instruction should be given only in separate schools and not as part of the regular general education system. On the other hand, we are distinctly of opinion that, unless this practical training is given along with the education which leads up to the High School Forms, it will not attract pupils, as the Calcutta University Commission emphatically points out. Nor is there, to our mind, an inherent incompatibility between vocational and educative training. The useful arts are based on certain scientific principles; thus they have a logic, and

they afford a mental culture, of their own ; and, unless they are incorporated into the general system, there will be a lack of that correlation between life and school, an essential requisite, without which the whole system will remain something abstract and detached—a mere exotic. In this connection, attention is invited to the list of subjects given in the appendix to this minute.

Here we may incidentally observe that the code of Hostel-grants ought to be revised in a liberal spirit. In not a few instances, in addition to building grants, a maintenance grant would be necessary. Moreover, there should be different ratios of aid for College, High School and Middle School hostels; while hostels intended for the ' depressed classes ' and other very backward sections of the community will call for very sympathetic treatment.

III HIGH SCHOOLS

According to the Calcutta University Commission, the training given in Secondary Schools should aim at an all-round development, not forgetful of the particular needs of modern life. It must be many-sided in courses and popular in sympathies, liberal in aim yet serving practical purposes. By carefully adapting itself to the requirements of different types of ability, it must be accessible to all and must thereby democratise knowledge. Consequently, a Secondary School should not be a mere nursery for the University ; but it should constitute a distinct unit in itself, leading up

to practical occupations or technological institutions no less than to University courses.

The Calcutta University Commission Report proceeds further to indicate (in the words of Professor Co-yajee) that at present literary studies form the main body of the system, with tags and fringes of scientific, technical and commercial education attached, as it were, by an after-thought. On the other hand, the distinctive feature of the reorganised system should be the ideal of practicability. As the Hon'ble Sir Abdur Rahim puts it, for the Indian students the dim shades of the cloisters are not so much needed as the inspirations of the workshop and the factory. The coming generation of young men should be freed from shamefacedness about working with their hands. The Calcutta University Commission, therefore, held that an improved system of education should prepare the coming generation most effectively for both citizenship and wage-earning; it should combine training for livelihood with training for life; it should at once alleviate poverty and dispel ignorance. Hence we are of opinion that the practical course to be taken as an integral part of the Secondary Education should be more than "hand and eye training." That training will not be—in fact, it is not meant to be—purely vocational; it does go hand in hand with what is called liberal or cultural education. However, it should not be mere pastime, only "a play at work." It should aim at a tangible, economical value, by whatever name it might be called. It should not only give a bent or bias to the

temper of the pupil but also impart a measure of knowledge and skill that could be turned to practical use. It would, indeed, appear to stand to reason that a subject like Drawing, or Music, or Carpentry, or Smithy, or Weaving, or Shorthand and Typewriting, or Book-keeping and Commercial Arithmetic, or Dress-making, or Needle-work, studied intelligently and systematically for several years under proper teachers, ought to yield far more tangible results of direct usefulness than merely inducing a bent or bias.

Another point on which we could not agree with the majority of the Committee relates to the use of the vernacular as the medium of instruction (Resolution No. 10 as given on Page 6 of the Committee's Report). We are of opinion that the Indian vernaculars of this Presidency, reinforced by the required terms borrowed from foreign languages, would adequately serve the purpose for almost every non-language subject in the High School course. We are prepared to meet the opposition half-way by agreeing to the change being made gradually, so that it should be completed in five or even ten years. We should have been content for the present if the word "recommendation" in line 4 of Resolution No. 10 above referred to were replaced by the word "proviso" or "condition". We have no fears that English, properly taught on practical lines, as a compulsory language, would suffer in the standard of attainments. This is one of the points on which the Calcutta University Commission have recorded their judgment with all the weight of their

authority; and in our opinion, no adequate reason has been urged for departing from the letter or the spirit of their recommendation. The views of that Commission may be thus summarised : We should begin with the mother-tongue as the medium; the use of the vernacular as the medium throughout the Secondary Schools for all subjects other than English and Mathematics is recommended as desirable; at present, the use of the English medium is excessive in the Secondary Schools to the detriment both of the pupil's education and of a rational use of the medium itself; while English is valuable as the means of intercommunication necessary for the maintenance of the unity of India and as a medium of touch with other countries, the mother-tongue is naturally the medium of expression for all those near and intimate things which are the very breath and substance of national feelings; it is through training in Intermediate Colleges that the most rapid improvement in English teaching should be effected; and wherever possible, technical terms should be transferred from English to the vernaculars.

The majority of this Committee grant that instruction through vernaculars should be the ultimate ideal. All the same, however, they are anxious to give full freedom to the managers of schools. The objective would thus seem to be the liberty of the manager and not a recognition of the fact that the vernacular ought to be the medium of instruction. The majority recommend that for half the time devoted to instruction the teaching should be through English and for

the other half through the vernacular; but they refuse to make this a condition, and they decline to fix approximately a period of time after which the option of the manager should cease and the vernacular should generally become the medium of instruction. We are, therefore, constrained to suppose that the so-called ultimate ideal is at best a pious wish; and it may conceal the real issue from the public. The Committee's Report expresses a hope that its recommendation that the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate Examination papers on other than language subjects be set in English as well as in some specified vernaculars, would improve matters. But this hope, it is to be feared, will very probably be foiled; seeing that, as the Report itself admits, the existing permission to the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate candidates to answer such papers in the vernacular has never been taken advantage of. Nothing but an express condition requiring the majority of subjects to be taught through the vernaculars, will disturb the present inertia or dispel the present fears. Further, freedom to managers will inevitably result in great variations of practice under the same system; and this cannot but prove detrimental, as a fair measure of uniformity is essential to success in this direction.

We recommend the inclusion of "Education" as one of the subjects under the technical optionals in the High School course. An objection was raised to the proposal in that such youth, though not fully trained, would go out into the world and claim recognition as

competent teachers. It was also urged that the introduction of "Education" as an optional subject at the Fifth Form stage would be premature. But managers of schools might surely be trusted to choose teachers with sufficient care. Further, at present, even a Third Form student could take a Higher Elementary Training course. Moreover, in the case of Secondary School-Leaving Certificate men, with "Education" studied as an optional subject, the period of training in a normal institution could be safely reduced from two years to one. Even persons who might not complete the full High School course would, under this system, be appreciably better equipped than similar men now going in for the Higher Elementary training. Our suggestion, therefore, could not fairly be regarded as impractical or premature. It would, on the other hand, combine general culture and special knowledge of a decidedly higher character in one admitted into a training school; and as such, it will help considerably to improve recruitment in the future.

We believe that the alternative proposal made by the Rev. W. Meston regarding the Secondary Course, with its concomitants, though rejected by a very narrow majority, merits careful consideration from the Government.

IV SECONDARY AND INTERMEDIATE BOARD

The Committee rejects the proposal for the establishment of a Secondary and Intermediate Board.

The reasons for this decision, as set forth in the Report, may be thus summarised :

- (i) There is a radical difference between Bengal and Madras in educational condition ; there the University controls High Schools without possessing the necessary agency to make that control effective, whereas in Madras the Department, possessing an effective inspecting agency and helped with the advice of the University and the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate Board, exercises efficient control.
- (ii) The University is the proper body to control Intermediate education, as the University is not encumbered by interest outside its own proper field and it can command competent advice.
- (iii) Education being a transferred subject under the control of a Minister responsible to the Legislative Council, a body or board in whose composition the Minister's voice would be slight but whose powers would be almost supreme, ought not to be interposed between the Minister and Secondary Education.
- (iv) Additional expenditure for the Board would be difficult to secure in present conditions.
- (v) A more satisfactory arrangement would be the reorganisation of the existing Secondary School-Leaving Certificate Board with, if need be, enlarged advisory functions.
- (vi) Any course of University Education of only two years would be too short to make the needed impression.

- (vii) The Committee was anxious not to introduce a separate body to look after each stage of education.

Before these seven arguments set forth in the Committee's Report are considered, the following two points need a preliminary mention as quite relevant to the subject :—

(a) In his Minute of Dissent, already referred to above, Sir C. Sankaran Nair recognises the appointment of a Board of the kind as an acknowledged item of the coming Reforms. (See Page 17 of his Minute.)

(b) A Committee was appointed by the Madras University Senate, on the 25th October 1919, consisting of 44 Fellows of the University, two-thirds of whom were directly connected with education, to consider and report on the Calcutta University Commissioners' Report. That Committee recommended :

(1) that the stage of admission to the University should be that of the present Intermediate, instead of that of the present Matriculation or Secondary School-Leaving Certificate Examination ;

(2) that the Intermediate courses should be severed from the University course of study proper ;

(3) that institutions providing training in Intermediate courses should be allowed to remain under the same management as University Colleges offering instruction in Degree courses, but as entirely separate institutions ;

(4) that no separation should be considered necessary as between the Secondary Schools and institutions

training students in the Intermediate courses, as regards finance or buildings or control ;

(5) That there should be established a Board of Secondary and Intermediate Education, distinct from the Educational Department, consisting of 15 members. Then, the Senate Committee makes proposals as regards the constitution and powers of this Board in terms almost identical with those employed by the Calcutta University Commission in dealing with this subject.

Next, the conclusions of the Calcutta University Commission on this subject may be summarised as follows :—

The Intermediate Classes do not rightly belong to the University stage ; their true place is in the sphere of Higher Secondary Education. Admission to the courses provided by the University in preparation for a Degree should take place at the level of what is now called the Intermediate Examination. Among its many advantages, this improved system will relieve the University from the encumbrance of immature students. During the two years of the Intermediate stage, students will be trained with a view to the needs of various callings in life, not only callings for which a further course at the University or at a professional college is necessary but also those callings which may be directly entered. These Intermediate Colleges must furnish opportunities of Higher Secondary education adapted to the needs of industry, commerce, agriculture and professional callings by providing a great

variety of special courses. While the University should have a voice in deciding what it is that Schools should teach, the representatives of the Schools should also have a voice in deciding what it is that the University should require. Therefore, while the University should have direct influence in the conduct of the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate or the Intermediate Examination, it has no claim to the sole management of those two Examinations. Other interests are involved in them, and other forms of experience should be blended in the authority controlling them. On the other hand, education should not be controlled in all its vital issues by bureaucracy, however competent and disinterested, acting in the name of Government. The province of Secondary Education (that is, the High School and the Intermediate stage) should not, as at present, fall under two independent jurisdictions, that is, the Department and the University. The needs of national education, as a whole, will be best answered by a reconstruction of the administrative system so as to enlist the close cooperation of public opinion with the Government. It must, therefore, be under a representative controlling authority commanding the confidence and support of public opinion. The schools, the university and the community as a whole are equally interested in the great question; and a Board so representative in character as to reflect all these interests and views can alone be a proper central authority to control this stage of education. It should be under a form of superintendence that would combine the various forms of available experience by securing a close

cooperation between the University, the Government and the public at large. The Calcutta University Commission estimates its recommendations on this subject as the very "pivot" of the whole scheme and the most immediately valuable reform.

In a few words the seven arguments (as above enumerated) set forth in the Committee's Report on Pages 8, 9 and 11 may next be commented on.

(1) If the Calcutta University was unable to exercise effective control over High Schools for want of proper agency, the simplest thing for the Calcutta University Commission was to recommend that the Calcutta University should be furnished with the necessary powers and agency ; or the Commission could have recommended the transfer of control to the Department with its inspecting staff. But the Commission expressly stated (as might be seen from the summary of the Commission's views given above) that the University had no claim to the sole management of these two examinations and that a bureaucratic department, however competent and disinterested, should not be allowed by itself to control education in its various issues. Hence, the Calcutta University Commission recommends a separate representative and composite Board.

(2) Even because the University will not be moved by interests outside its own proper field, and because the Intermediate stage of education has a three-fold aim (see Page 10 of this Committee's Report), while only one aspect out of three interests the

University, the University cannot be the sole controlling authority of this stage of education.

(3) If it is undesirable to interpose, between the Minister and Secondary Education, a Board, in whose composition he has some voice and whose undue exercise of power he can check even by dissolving the Board, how will it improve matters to hand over the control of the Intermediate stage of education to the University over which it is insisted that the Minister can, and ought to, have no control whatever?

(4) The cost of maintaining the controlling Board is a very small fraction of the total expenditure for reorganising Secondary (including Intermediate) education. If funds could be found for that total expenditure, the actual cost of the Board itself need not hinder reform.

(5) It makes no material difference whether the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate Board is so enlarged as to take in the Intermediate stage of education also or a new representative Board is formed which absorbs the present Secondary School-Leaving Certificate Board. The vital point is to place this part of the education (including the High School and the Intermediate stage) under a thoroughly representative and a fairly independent Board. In details this scheme may vary from the proposals of the Calcutta University Commission. This meets argument (vii) also.

(6) The Government Order appointing this Committee states that the Madras University approves of the opinion that the Intermediate stage of education should be definitely regarded as part of the School

course. If that be conceded, it is difficult to see how the defect of a merely two years' University course could be remedied through its fictitious enlargement by including in it what is admittedly a mere School course. The true remedy lies, it would seem, in gradually introducing a change akin to the Rev. W. Meston's proposal of curtailing the regular Secondary course (including the Intermediate stage) by one year and adding the time thus gained to the University course. It may be observed that the Calcutta University Commission, though suggesting a three years' Degree course, accepts one of two years as sufficient for the present.

For these reasons, we are decidedly of opinion that the creation of a separate Board for Secondary and Intermediate Education is a vital necessity which cannot be long postponed without detriment to the educational interest of the Presidency. We think that the direct and immediate control of a University should be confined to Graduate and Post-Graduate classes and not to the preparatory stages.

- V We earnestly recommend to Government the suggestions regarding the reorganisation of the Inspecting Staff as indicated on Page 17, Paragraph 34 (c), of the Committee's Report.
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(D)
THE TEMPLE ENTRY BILL*
(1934)

With grateful thanks for the invitation of my humble opinion on this Bill and sincere apologies for the great delay, due to ill-health, in submitting it, I beg to note down, as follows, my observations on the intended enactment.

By personal faith, I am not a worshipper in ordinary Hindu temples. Nevertheless, I earnestly endeavour to judge this matter with an unbiassed mind and with a very careful consideration of the issues involved.

It appears to me that, on grounds of both principle and policy, it is *quite inadvisable* to accord public support to the proposed legislation.

1. *Principle.* The State in India is pledged to the principle of neutrality in matters religious; it is wholly a non-religious organisation. That principle may appear to have been deviated from on diverse occasions. But such deviations were *only mediately* related to the *practice* of religion. Their direct object, and in actual fact their main result, was to secure for

*Statement of opinion in response to an invitation from Government through the Collector, East Godavari (13-2-34).

individuals freedom in regard to certain personal and social rights, but never to guarantee religious 'communion' in the face of an act of non-conformity to existing practice. It was only immunity from interference or molestation as touching person, property and civic or social life. But the State did not, it held that it could not, call upon the community to accord to one who had departed from well-established usage and custom, through acts of commission or omission, an exemption from those religious consequences which usually follow such departures—namely, non-participation in the religious pursuits of the community, as a body. To be within the 'communion' or to be put out of the 'communion'—that question the community, as a body, alone could decide through its accredited 'superiors'. There the individual should take his chance with the community at large; the State could not settle the issue for him, except on the basis of custom and usage. And the decisive test of this 'communion' is permission or prohibition in regard to temple-entry—that is, participation in *conjoint worship*. In the application of this test, the State has invariably—and very wisely—been abstaining from any part. However, in the present instance, the State undertakes to provide, by explicit legislation, ways and means of determining what attitude the community, as a body, should take in a matter of clear and sure deviation from immemorial custom and usage on a point that is intimately connected with—indeed, a point that reaches down to the very basis of—religious 'communion'. Hereby, the community—at any rate, a very appreciable section

of it—will be required, under the authority of law, to admit a body of “non-admissibles” into the sanctuary of ‘worship’, hitherto governed only by well-established usage. The present Bill will, therefore, result in an infringement of the principle of religious neutrality in a manner and to a degree that would appear to justify the conclusion that, hereafter, the State would lend countenance to—even place a premium upon—any glaring neglect — indeed, an aggressive invasion — of the ‘fundamentals’ of religious ‘communion’. Hitherto, the non-conformist few were protected from the personal, social and civic consequences, apart from the religious disabilities, of non-conformity; hereafter, it will appear as though the conformist many will be penalised, in matters intimately religious, if they do not fraternise, even in their temples, with the non-conformists. “Agree to worship along with those who, from time beyond human memory, have been outside the pale of your shrines, or put yourself outside that sacred pale.” Does this not look like withdrawing the franchise from the ‘loyal’, even because of their ‘loyalty’? Of course, this is not ‘conversion by force’; but upon minds whose convictions are based, not upon intelligent reflection, but upon hoary tradition, this measure will inevitably produce the impression that it is ‘a stepping-stone’ to that extreme act. Religious neutrality, they cannot but think, is a pledge kept to the ear but broken to the heart.

2. *Policy.* This enactment will necessarily operate on a *mass scale*. The Hindu community will be

divided *acutely* and *extensively*. Every Hindu temple of any note will be a 'storm centre'. People habitually indifferent will be roused, on both sides, into vigorous, if not violent, activity. The decision of the majority, not merely of those technically named *voters* but of those who claim to be lawful worshippers, will not be easy to ascertain; when 'awarded,' it will be widely challenged; when sought to be enforced, it will be stoutly—almost desperately—opposed; litigation inside the courts, demonstrations outside the courts, will very rudely disturb peace and order. And all the while, this excitement will derive its sanction and its sustenance from religious conviction. I am unable to feel satisfied that the State would be well-advised—that it would be discharging a prime duty—if it helped, to any extent, in creating or countenancing a situation so undesirable in its nature and so extensive in its range. That way sound policy does not seem to lie. With the utmost deference to those who observe that public opinion is decidedly in favour of this reform, I cannot help suspecting that "things are not what they seem."

I should deem it a clear gain if this much-desired change were wrought through certain apparently indirect, but in the long run very effective, methods. I may instance a few: (a) The complete removal of existing barriers to union in all activities or amenities of life other than those purely and intimately religious—all interests and occupations that require mutual intercourse of united action outside the temple precincts;

so that common civic and social life, with the affinities it creates, may peacefully pave the way for 'religious communion'. At present, it is a lamentably divided life all round. If that division is minimised and reciprocity is established—rather, evolved—in most of the daily concerns and interests of life, the problem of association in temples will lose most of its acuteness with both the parties now determined to make it a mortal issue. (b) The admission of 'the depressed classes' into private temples — not difficult, in most cases, to secure—by friendly negotiations with owner-trustees. (c) The establishment of temples which, while satisfying all the ceremonial requisites, will be open to and used by all classes of temple-goers, so as to acquire for them gradually the authority and the sanctity now associated with existing temples. (d) Sustained efforts to be made, in relation to *individual* public temples, for creating a situation that will secure and enjoin an unquestionably predominant public opinion, in that area and as regards that temple, in favour of unrestricted entry. Reformers and philanthropists may advantageously concentrate resources and energies on these methods.

Anyhow, while cherishing the utmost good-will and sympathy towards 'the depressed classes', we should also vividly realise that this question of temple-entry touches the roots of *institutional religion*, which is outside the purview of a secular State; that it *equally* concerns several millions on either side and will, therefore, not be easily or speedily amenable to logic or legislation;

that no State can peremptorily set it at rest by a mandate from the Council-chamber, without serious detriment to peace and order; and that real effectual remedy should be applied through the processes, however slow, of the spread of liberal ideas, of winning persuasion, of neighbourly cooperation, of steady *approchement*, of increasing amalgamation. Thus "the time-spirit" will prevail.

THE END

